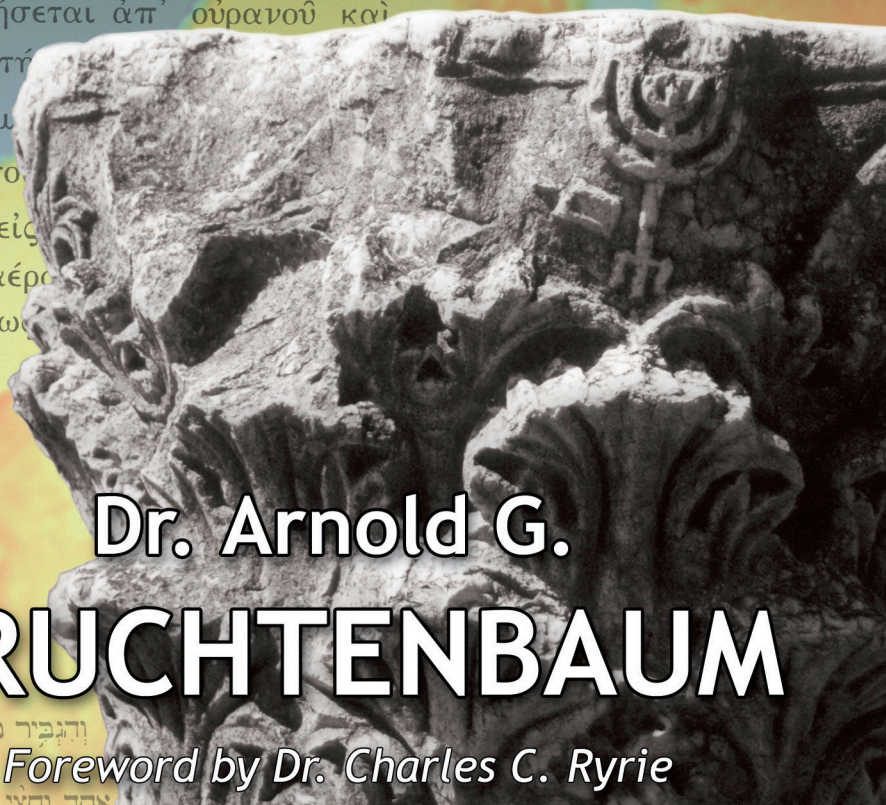
REVISED EDITION

THE FOOTSTEPS of the MESSIAH

A Study of the Sequence of Prophetic Events



Dr. Arnold G.
FRUCHTENBAUM

Foreword by Dr. Charles C. Ryrie

the FOOTSTEPS *of the* MESSIAH

Other books by Dr. Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum

Jesus Was A Jew

Hebrew Christianity: Its Theology, History and Philosophy

Biblical Lovemaking: A Study of the Song of Solomon

A Passover Haggadah for Jewish Believers

Israelology: The Missing Link in Systematic Theology

Messianic Christology:
A Study of Old Testament Prophecy
Concerning the First Coming of the Messiah

A Study Guide of Israel:
Historical and Geographical

The Messianic Jewish Epistles:
An Exposition of Hebrews, James, I & II Peter, and Jude

the

FOOTSTEPS

of the

MESSIAH

A Study of the Sequence
of Prophetic Events

Revised Edition

Arnold G.
Fruchtenbaum
Th.M., Ph.D.

ARIEL MINISTRIES
Publisher

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Fruchtenbaum, Arnold G.
Footsteps of the Messiah / by Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum. p. cm.
Originally published: San Antonio, Tex. : Ariel Press, c1982.
ISBN 0-914863-09-6 — ISBN 091486310X (pbk.)
1. Bible—Prophecies—End of the world. 2. End of the world—Biblical teaching. I. Title.

BS649.E63F78 2003
236'.9—dc21 2002156633

Copyright © 2003, 2004 by Ariel Ministries
All Rights Reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing.

Library of Congress Control Number: 2002156633
ISBN 0-914863-09-6 (hardback) ISBN 0-914863-10-X (paperback)

Revised Edition 9 10 11 12

Map of Israel on front cover used by permission.
Copyright © 2002, Tim Dowley and Peter Wyart trading as Three's Company.
Map designed by Geoff Walker, Hardlines, England.

Artwork and design on cover and all charts created by Matthew Lipsey.
Base maps for charts on pages 308 and 467 created using MapRender3D software by Digital Wisdom Inc., Tappahannock, VA.

Published by
אריאל ARIEL MINISTRIES

PO Box 792507
San Antonio, TX 98279-2507
210-344-7707
www.ariel.org

Designed by
Creative continuum

2910 E. La Palma Avenue, Suite C
Anaheim, CA 92806
714-630-2960
www.creativecontinuum.com

To Rev. Burl Haynie

Who discipled me in my early spiritual life

Who taught me how to study the Word

Who gave me a love for the prophetic Word

this volume is affectionately dedicated.



Since the original publication of this work, on August 11, 1996,
Burl Haynie has gone home to be with the Lord he loved so much.

Table of Contents

Foreword xxvii
Preface to the Original Edition xxix
Preface to the Revised Edition xxxi

Part I: Introductory Material

Chapter 1: Introduction 3
A. The Rules of Interpretation 3
B. The Outline of Eschatology 7
C. The Book of the Revelation 8
1. The Outline of the Book of Revelation 8
2. Old and New Things in the Revelation 10
3. The Usage of Symbols in the Revelation 11
4. The Introduction to the Revelation—Revelation 1:1-3 12
5. The Salutation—Revelation 1:4-8 14
6. The Things that John Saw—Revelation 1:9-20 15

Chapter 2: The Times of the Gentiles 21
A. Daniel 2:31-45 22
B. Daniel 7:1-28 25
C. Summary and Combination of Daniel Chapters Two and Seven 31
1. The Summary of the First Three Empires 32
2. The Fourth Empire—Imperialism 33
D. Revelation 13:1-10 37
E. Revelation 17:7-14 40
F. Summary of the Four Chapters 43

Part II: The Course of this Age

Chapter 3: The Eschatology of the Visible Church: the Things Which Are—the Seven Churches 47
A. Characteristics 47
B. Interpretation.....48
C. Basic Outline.....50
D. The Seven Letters 50
1. Ephesus:
The Apostolic Church
(A.D. 30-100)—Revelation 2:1-7.....50
2. Smyrna:
The Church of the Roman Persecution
(A.D. 100-313)—Revelation 2:8-11.....52
3. Pergamum:
The Church of the Age of Constantine
(A.D. 313-600)—Revelation 2:12-17.....54
4. Thyatira:
The Church of the Dark Ages
(A.D. 600-1517)—Revelation 2:18-29.....57
5. Sardis:
The Church of the Reformation
(A.D. 1517-1648)—Revelation 3:1-6.....61
6. Philadelphia:
The Church of the Great Missionary Movement
(A.D. 1648-1900)—Revelation 3:7-13.....63
7. Laodicea:
The Church of the Apostasy
(A.D. 1900-present day)—Revelation 3:14-22 65

Chapter 4: The Sequence of Pretribulational Events 91
A. World Wars I and II.....91
B. The Reestablishment of Israel.....97
C. Jerusalem Under Jewish Control.....104
D. The Northern Alliance Invasion of Israel—
Ezekiel 38:1-39:16 106
1. The Exposition of the Passage.....106
2. The Timing of the Invasion 117
E. The One World Government 125

F. The Ten Kingdoms 126
G. The Rise of the Antichrist....127
H. The Period of Peace and False Security 128
I. The Seven-year Covenant....128
Summary....128

Chapter 5: Other Pretribulational Events 129
A. Blackout I....129
B. The Return of Elijah 130
C. The Third Temple?....134

Chapter 6: The Eschatology of the Invisible Church....139
A. Definition....139
B. The Rapture of the Church 142
1. The Events of the Rapture 142
2. The Timing of the Rapture....149
C. The Judgment Seat of the Messiah 155
1. The Judgment 155
2. The Rewards....158
D. The Marriage of the Lamb....160

Chapter 7: Events in Heaven Prior to the Tribulation 163
A. The Throne of God—Revelation 4:1-11 163
B. The Lamb and the Seven-Sealed Scroll—
Revelation 5:1-14....167

Part III: The Great Tribulation

Chapter 8: The Great Tribulation: Introduction 173
A. Names 173
B. Purposes of the Tribulation 175
1. To Make an End of Wickedness and Wicked Ones....175
2. To Bring About a Worldwide Revival 175
3. To Break the Power of the Holy People....178
C. General Descriptions....179
1. The Little Apocalypse of Isaiah 179
2. The Day of Jehovah Passages 181

Chapter 9: The Beginning of the Tribulation 187
A. Daniel 9:24-27 187
1. The Decree of the Seventy Sevens—Daniel 9:24a 188
2. The Purpose of the Seventy Sevens—Daniel 9:24b 189
3. The Starting Point of the Seventy Sevens—Daniel 9:25a 192
4. The First Sixty-Nine Sevens—Daniel 9:25b 192
5. The Events Between the Sixty-Ninth and the Seventieth Sevens—Daniel 9:26 193
6. The Seventieth Seven—Daniel 9:27 195
B. Isaiah 28:14-22 198

Chapter 10: The Events of the First Half of the Tribulation 203
A. The Seal Judgments 203
1. The First Seal—Revelation 6:1-2 204
2. The Second Seal—Revelation 6:3-4 216
3. The Third Seal—Revelation 6:5-6 216
4. The Fourth Seal—Revelation 6:7-8 217
5. The Fifth Seal—Revelation 6:9-11 217
6. The Sixth Seal—Revelation 6:12-17 218
B. The 144,000 Jews and the Worldwide Revival 219
1. The Means of the Worldwide Revival—Revelation 7:1-8 219
2. The Results—Revelation 7:9-17 221
C. The Trumpet Judgments 223
1. The Prelude—Revelation 8:1-6 223
2. The First Trumpet—Revelation 8:7 223
3. The Second Trumpet—Revelation 8:8-9 224
4. The Third Trumpet—Revelation 8:10-11 224
5. The Fourth Trumpet—Revelation 8:12 224
6. The Prelude to the Woe Judgments—Revelation 8:13 225
7. The Fifth Trumpet: the First Woe Judgment—Revelation 9:1-12 225
8. The Sixth Trumpet: The Second Woe Judgment—Revelation 9:13-21 227
D. The Two Witnesses—Revelation 11:3-6 231

E. The Ecclesiastical Babylon—Revelation 17:1-6 233
Summary.....235

Chapter 11: The Events of the Middle of the Tribulation 237
A. The Little Book—Revelation 10:1-11 237
B. The Second Worldwide Conflict—Daniel 11:40-45 240
C. The Antichrist Killed 241
D. Satan Cast Down to the Earth—Revelation 12:7-12 242
E. The Resurrection of the Antichrist—Revelation 13:3 243
F. Three Kings Killed—Seven Submit.....244
G. Destruction of Ecclesiastical Babylon—Revelation 17:16 245
H. The Death of the Two Witnesses—Revelation 11:7-13....245
I. The Worship of the Antichrist—Revelation 13:3-10 247
J. The False Prophet—Revelation 13:11-15 249
K. 666: The Mark of the Beast—Revelation 13:16-18 250
L. The Seven-year Covenant Broken.....252
M. The Abomination of Desolation.....252
N. The Persecution of the Jews 256
O. Midtribulation Announcements.....264
P. The Seventh Trumpet: The Third Woe Judgment—Revelation 11:14-19 269

Chapter 12: The Events of the Second Half of the Tribulation 273
A. The Prelude—Revelation 15:1-16:1 273
B. The Bowl Judgments.....274
1. The First Bowl Judgment—Revelation 16:2 274
2. The Second Bowl Judgment—Revelation 16:3 275
3. The Third Bowl Judgment—Revelation 16:4-7 275
4. The Fourth Bowl Judgment—Revelation 16:8-9 276
5. The Fifth Bowl Judgment—Revelation 16:10-11 276

Chapter 13: The Great Tribulation: Additional Features and Facts.....277
A. Babylon 277
B. Israel and the Tribulation 277
1. Israel in General 278
2. The Faithful Remnant 286
3. The City of Refuge 290
4. The Basis of the Second Coming of the Messiah.....293

Chapter 14: The Campaign of Armageddon and The Second Coming of Jesus the Messiah.....309
A. The First Stage:
The Assembling of the Allies of the Antichrist 309
B. The Second Stage:
The Destruction of Babylon 313
C. The Third Stage:
The Fall of Jerusalem 327
D. The Fourth Stage:
The Armies of the Antichrist at Bozrah.....330
E. The Fifth Stage:
The National Regeneration of Israel.....331
F. The Sixth Stage:
The Second Coming of the Messiah 339
1. The Place of the Second Coming.....339
2. The Manner of the Second Coming 343
G. The Seventh Stage:
The Battle From Bozrah
to the Valley of Jehoshaphat 351
H. The Eighth Stage:
The Victory Ascent Up the Mount of Olives 355

Part IV: The Interval

Chapter 15: The Seventy-five Day Interval.....361
A. The Removal of the
Abomination of Desolation 362

B. The Antichrist....362
C. The False Prophet....363
D. Satan's Fifth Abode....363
E. The Judgment of the Gentiles....364
F. The Resurrection of the Old Testament Saints....367
G. The Resurrection of the Tribulation Saints....368
H. The First Resurrection....369
I. The Marriage Feast of the Lamb....370

Part V: The Messianic Kingdom....373

Chapter 16: The Basis for the Belief in the Messianic Kingdom....375

Chapter 17: General Characteristics of the Messianic Kingdom....379
A. Psalm 15:1-5....379
B. Psalm 24:1-6....379
C. Isaiah 2:2-4....380
D. Isaiah 11:6-9....381
E. Isaiah 65:17-25....381
F. Micah 4:1-5....384
Summary....384

Chapter 18: The Government of the Messianic Kingdom....387
A. The King: The Lord Jesus the Messiah....388
1. The Establishment of the Throne....388
2. The Character of His Reign....391
B. The Gentile Branch of Government....394
1. The Church and the Tribulation Saints....394
2. Kings....395
C. The Jewish Branch of Government....396
1. David: The King and Prince....396
2. The Twelve Apostles Over the Twelve Tribes....398
3. Princes....398

4. Judges and Counselors 400
5. Israel Over the Gentiles 400

Chapter 19: Israel in the Messianic Kingdom 403
A. The Four Facets of the Final Restoration of Israel 403
1. The Regeneration of Israel 404
2. The Regathering of Israel 411
3. The Possession of the Land 420
4. The Reestablishment of the Davidic Throne 432
B. Other Characteristics of Israel's Final Restoration 437
1. Reunited as a Nation 437
2. The Center of Gentile Attention 439
3. Righteousness, Holiness, Peace, Security, Joy, and Gladness 442
C. The Millennial Mountain of Jehovah's House 443
D. The Millennial Temple—Ezekiel 40:5-43:27 450
E. The Millennial System of Priesthood and Sacrifice—Ezekiel 44:1-46:24 452
F. The Millennial River—Ezekiel 47:1-12 463
G. The Millennial Israel—Ezekiel 47:13-48:29 466
H. The Millennial Jerusalem—Ezekiel 48:30-35 468

Chapter 20: The Gentiles in the Messianic Kingdom 485
A. General Characteristics 485
B. The Obligation to Observe the Feast of Tabernacles 488
C. The Arab States 489
1. Lebanon 492
2. Jordan 492
3. Egypt 497
4. Assyria: Northern Iraq 501
5. Kedar and Hazor: Saudi Arabia 502
6. Elam: Persia or Iran 502
D. The Two Desolate Spots of the Kingdom 503
1. Babylon: Southern Iraq 503
2. Edom: Southern Jordan 505

Part VI: The Aftermath

Chapter 21: The Aftermath 511
A. The Loosing of Satan and the Final Invasion of Israel 511
B. The Great White Throne Judgment.....513
C. The Second Resurrection 516
D. The Second Death: the Lake of Fire.....517

Part VII: The Eternal Order

Chapter 22: The Eternal Order 523
A. The Passing Away of the Old Order and the Creation of the Eternal Order—Revelation 21:1-8 523
B. The Eternal New Jerusalem—Revelation 21:9-22:5 527
1. The Revelation of the Establishment of the City—Revelation 21:9-10 527
2. The Description of the New Jerusalem—Revelation 21:11-22:5 527

Part VIII: Conclusion

Chapter 23: Conclusion..... 535
A. The Authentication of the Book of Revelation—Revelation 22:6-9 535
B. Declarations in Light of the Revelation—Revelation 22:10-15 536
C. The First Affirmation of Christ—Revelation 22:16 538
D. The Invitation of the Holy Spirit and the Church—Revelation 22:17.....538
E. The Warnings—Revelation 22:18-19 538
F. The Second Affirmation of Christ—Revelation 22:20 540
G. The Benediction—Revelation 22:21.....540

Appendices

Appendix I: The Six Abodes of Satan 543
A. The First Abode:
The Throne of God 545
B. The Second Abode:
The Mineral Garden of Eden 548
C. The Third Abode:
The Atmospheric Heavens 556
D. The Fourth Abode:
The Earth 560
E. The Fifth Abode:
The Abyss 561
F. The Sixth Abode:
The Lake of Fire 562

Appendix II: II Thessalonians 2:1-12 565

Appendix III: The Wife of Jehovah and the Bride of Messiah 569
A. Israel: The Wife of Jehovah 569
1. Stage One: The Marriage Contract 569
2. Stage Two: The Great Adultery 572
3. Stage Three: The Separation 575
4. Stage Four: The Divorce 576
5. Stage Five: The Punishment 577
6. Stage Six: The Remarriage with Restored Blessings 581
Summary 585
B. The Church: The Bride of the Messiah 585
1. The Espousal—II Corinthians 11:2 586
2. The Process of Sanctification or Maturing of the Bride—Ephesians 5:25-27 586
3. The Marriage—Revelation 19:6-9 587
4. The Eternal Abode of the Bride—Revelation 21:9-22:5 590
Conclusion 590

Appendix IV: The Shechinah Glory in History and Prophecy 591
A. Definitions 591
B. The Shechinah Glory in Old Testament History 592
1. The Garden of Eden 592
2. The Abrahamic Covenant 593
3. The Burning Bush 594
4. The Exodus 594
5. Mount Sinai 596
6. The Special Manifestation of the Shechinah Glory to Moses 598
7. The Tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant 601
8. The Book of Leviticus 602
9. The Book of Numbers 603
10. The Period of Joshua and the Judges 604
11. The Solomonic Temple 604
12. The Book of Ezekiel and the Departure of the Shechinah Glory 605
13. The Second Temple 606
C. The Shechinah Glory in New Testament History 607
1. Appearance to the Shepherds 607
2. The Christmas Star 607
3. The Coming of the Shechinah Glory in a New Form 608
4. The Transfiguration 609
5. The Reflection of that Glory 611
6. The Book of Acts 612
7. The Revelation 614
D. The Shechinah Glory in Prophecy 614
1. The Great Tribulation 614
2. The Second Coming of the Messiah 614
3. The Millennium 615
4. The Eternal Order 619

Appendix V: The Olivet Discourse 621
A. The Historical Setting—Matthew 24:1-2; Mark 13:1-2; Luke 21:5-6 622
B. The Three Questions—Matthew 24:3; Mark 13:3-4; Luke 21:7 623

C. The General Characteristics of the Church Age—
Matthew 24:4-6; Mark 13:6-7; Luke 21:8-9.....624
1. The Rise of False Messiahs.....625
2. The Existence of Local Wars.....625
3. Conclusion.....625
D. The Sign of the End of the Age—
Matthew 24:7-8; Mark 13:8; Luke 21:10-11.....626
E. Personal Experiences of the Apostles—
Mark 13:9-13; Luke 21:12-19.....627
F. The Sign of the Fall of Jerusalem—
Luke 21:20-24.....629
G. The Great Tribulation—
Matthew 24:9-26; Mark 13:14-23.....630
1. The Events of the First Half of the Tribulation—
Matthew 24:9-14.....631
2. The Events of the Second Half of the Tribulation—
Matthew 24:15-20; Mark 13:14-23.....632
H. The Sign of the Second Coming of the Messiah—
Matthew 24:29-30; Mark 13:24-26; Luke 21:25-27....634
I. The Regathering of Israel—
Matthew 24:31; Mark 13:27.....636
J. The Exhortation—Luke 21:28.....636
K. The Parable of the Fig Tree—
Matthew 24:32-35; Mark 13:28-32; Luke 21:29-33....637
L. The Rapture of the Church—
Matthew 24:36-42; Luke 21:34-36.....640
M. Parables Urging Watchfulness, Readiness, and Laboring—
Matthew 24:43-25:30; Mark 13:33-37.....642
1. The Parable of the Porter—Mark 13:33-37.....643
2. The Parable of the Master of the House—
Matthew 24:43-44.....643
3. The Parable of the Faithful Servant and the Evil Servant—
Matthew 24:45-51.....644
4. The Parable of the Ten Virgins—Matthew 25:1-13.....644
5. The Parable of the Talents—Matthew 25:14-30.....646
N. The Judgment of the Gentiles—Matthew 25:31-46.....647
Conclusion.....650

Appendix VI: The Eight Mysteries of the New Testament..651
Introduction....651
A. Definition....651
1. Scripture....651
2. Six Observations....653
B. Usage....654
C. The Origin of Paul's Concept....655
1. The Pagan Mystery Religions....655
2. The Jewish Context....656
D. Summary of the Content of the Mystery....656
1. The Gospels....656
2. Paul's Writings....656
3. The Book of Revelation....658
E. Opposition to the Mystery....658
F. The Understanding of the Mystery....659
G. The Number of Mysteries....660
1. The Mystery of the Kingdom....660
2. The Five Mysteries of the Church....670
3. The Mystery of Israel's Hardening....677
4. The Mystery of the Seven Climactic Judgments and the Defeat of the Two Satanic Mysteries....686
H. Conclusion: It Is Finished....695

Appendix VII: Immortality....697
A. Definition....697
B. The Evidences of the Doctrine of Immortality....698
1. Gathered to His People....698
2. Joined the Fathers....699
3. The Continuous Existence of Enoch....699
4. The Assurance of Job....699
5. The Doctrine of Resurrection....700
6. The Consciousness of the Soul....700
7. Joining the Dead....701
8. The Consciousness of the Souls of Sheol....701
9. Eternity in the Heart....702
10. Samuel's Appearance to Saul....702
11. God is a God of the Living....703
12. Through Death is Life....703
13. The Promise of Future Glory....703

14. The Promise of a Future Life 704
15. The Soul is Renewed 704
16. Immortality Through the Gospel....704
17. Future Rewards and Punishments 704
C. The Benefits of the Doctrine of Immortality....705
1. Our Hope of Future Joy....705
2. Our Temporary Residence in this Life....705
3. Our Motivation for Righteous Living....706
D. False Views....706
1. Cessation of Existence....706
2. Transmigration of the Soul or Reincarnation....706
3. Conditional Immortality....707
4. Annihilationism....708

Appendix VIII: The Intermediate State Between Death and Resurrection....719
A. The Meaning....719
B. The State of the Believer....719
1. A State Far Better....720
2. A State of Rest....720
3. A State of Consciousness....721
C. The State of the Unbeliever....721
1. A State of Torment....721
2. A State of Confinement....722
3. A State of Punishment....722
4. Deductions....722
D. The Intermediate Body....723
1. The Issue....723
2. The Key Passage—II Corinthians 5:1-10....723
3. The Question....726
4. The Description....727
5. The Conclusion....729
E. The False Teachings....729
1. The Second Probation Theory....729
2. Soul-Sleeping....733

Appendix IX: The Place of the Dead 737
A. The Unseen World 737
1. Sheol 737
2. Hades 738
3. Abbadon 739
4. The Pit 740
5. The Abyss 741
6. Tartarus 742
7. Hell 743
8. Gehenna 744
9. The Lake of Fire 745
10. Abraham's Bosom 746
11. Paradise 747
12. Heaven 748
13. The New Jerusalem 749
14. Conclusions 750
B. The Place of the Dead in the Old Testament 752
1. The Scripture 752
2. The Conditions from Adam to the Ascension of the Messiah 752
C. The Place of the Dead Today 753
1. The Believers 753
2. The Unbelievers 754
D. The Place of the Dead in the Future 755
1. The Future of the Believers 755
2. The Future of the Unbelievers 756
E. False Views Concerning the Place of the Dead 757
1. The Teaching Concerning Limbus Infantum 758
2. The Teaching Concerning Purgatory 758

Appendix X: The Remnant of Israel: Past, Present, and Future 763
Introduction 763
1. Meaning 763
2. Ramifications 763
3. The Concept 764
A. The Past 764
1. Elijah—I Kings 16:29-19:18 764
2. The Book of Immanuel—Isaiah 7:1-12:6 768

B. The Present 769
1. I Peter 2:1-10 770
2. Romans 9:1-11:24 774
C. The Future 786
1. The Remnant of Israel During the Tribulation 786
2. The Faithful Remnant 787
3. The Faithful Remnant and Israel's National Salvation 788
4. The Faithful Remnant of Israel in the Messianic Kingdom 792

Appendix XI: Old Testament References in the Book of Revelation 793

Scripture Index 803

Charts

Chart #1: Chronology of Eschatology 2
Chart #2a: The Times of the Gentiles 19
Chart #2b: The Times of the Gentiles 20
Chart #3: The Church Age 46
Chart #4: The First Half of the Great Tribulation 202
Chart #5: Events of the Middle of the Tribulation 236
Chart #6: The Second Half of the Great Tribulation 272
Chart #7: The Campaign of Armageddon 308
Chart #8: The Seventy-five Day Interval 360
Chart #9: The Messianic Kingdom, Aftermath and Eternal Order 374
Chart #10: Israel in the Messianic Kingdom 467
Chart #11: The Eastern Gate (Millennium) 481
Chart #12: The Gates of Jerusalem (Millennium) 481
Chart #13: The Temple Compound (Millennium) 483
Chart #14: The Temple (Millennium) 484
Chart #15: The Altar (Millennium) 484

Diagrams

The Government of the Messianic Kingdom 387
The Millennial Mountain of Jehovah's House 450
The Millennial River 465

If you shall see kingdoms rising against

each other in turn, then give heed and

note *the footsteps of the Messiah.*

Bereshit Rabbah XLII:4

Foreword
by Charles C. Ryrie

Eschatology seems to suffer at the hands both of its friends and foes. Those who play it down usually avoid assigning specific meaning to prophetic texts. Those who play it up often assign too much.

But the prophetic portions of the Bible won't go away. The biblical interpreter must interact with them and in the detail and specificity in which they were written. Dr. Fruchtenbaum has done that, seeking always to try to understand the full meaning of the biblical revelation. His frame of reference is dispensational, pretribulational Premillennialism—the only one that can provide a consistently harmonious interpretation of prophecy.

The author's consideration of the biblical material is thorough and thought-provoking. His conclusions will not always meet with full agreement even by those who share his approach, but those who read this book cannot help but be instructed and stimulated by his work.

Preface to the Original Edition

The main burden of this book is a study of prophecy in relation to the sequence of events. It is written from the dispensational, pretribulational and premillennial viewpoint. Because it is primarily concerned with the study of the sequence of events, the author chose not to deal with the various other viewpoints, such as Mid- and Posttribulationalism, or A- or Postmillennialism. This has been ably done through the writings of J. Dwight Pentecost (*Things to Come*), John F. Walvoord (*The Rapture Question; The Blessed Hope and the Tribulation; The Return of the Lord; The Millennium*), Charles C. Ryrie (*The Basis of the Premillennial Faith, Dispensationalism Today*), among many others. Whatever variations are discussed in this volume are only those within the dispensational, pretribulational and premillennial position.

It is hoped that this volume will make a contribution within the dispensational school of thought in relation to eschatology, especially concerning the sequence of events.

All Scriptures quoted, unless otherwise noted, are from the American Standard Version of 1901.

My special appreciation goes to Kim Bachman, who painstakingly worked over the four charts and the map contained in this work.

My most grateful thanks goes to Mrs. Mark (Charmaine) O'Neill for the many hours she spent typing and retyping this

manuscript. She worked on the manuscript while holding down a full time job and her faithfulness has been much appreciated.

Special thanks also go to my wife Mary Ann who painstakingly read the manuscript and proofs and made many helpful suggestions which were incorporated into the final product.

It has taken over six years to complete this work and I am thankful to the Lord for the grace and the privilege to put it together. It represents work done during many travels in many states and two nations, one of which (Israel) plays the major role in this book.

Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum
San Antonio, Texas
December 15, 1977

Preface to the Revised Edition

More than twenty years have passed since the original writing of this book, which has undergone seven printings without any major revisions. One of the advantages of *not* writing a prophecy book based on current events is that no major revisions need to be written every few years as current events change. While this edition does have some extensive revisions, none of these revisions changes the basic content of the original work except in two or three places. Even then it is not based on current events, but on further reflections on some passages after an additional twenty-plus years of teaching on this subject. Even the changes in Eastern Europe only required changing the names of the participants, not the actual geographical area. In some cases, less emphasis has been placed (i.e. the seven ages of church history, though the author still leans that way), but in other places, the position has been strengthened (i.e. the pretribulational Rapture). Also, five new appendices have been added: Appendix VI: The Eight Mysteries of the New Testament; Appendix VII: Immortality; Appendix VIII: The Intermediate State Between Death and Resurrection; Appendix IX: The Place of the Dead; Appendix X: The Remnant of Israel: Past, Present, and Future. The primary places where the reader will find these revisions are:

The Times of the Gentiles - The Two Division Stage

The Eschatology of the Visible Church - The Interpretation of the Seven Letters

The Church of Laodicea

The Russian Invasion of Israel

The Tribe of Dan and the 144,000 Jews

Appendix V: The Olivet Discourse - The section dealing with the Rapture of the Church

Other revisions throughout the book are minor compared to the above.

In addition to the books recommended in the original preface (all of which are still in print except that Ryrie's *Dispensationalism Today* has been revised and updated and is now entitled *Dispensationalism*), other fine books have been published dealing with issues outside the premillennial, pretribulational area, and among these are:-

Charting the End Times, Tim LaHaye and Thomas Ice

The Trumpet Sounds, Thomas Ice and Timothy Demy, General Editors

Issues in Dispensationalism, Wesley R. Willis and John R. Master, General Editors

Maranatha: Our Lord, Come! A Definitive Study of the Rapture of the Church, Renald Showers

There Really Is a Difference! A Comparison of Covenant and Dispensational Theology, Renald Showers

The End Times Controversy, Tim LaHaye and Thomas Ice, General Editors

In addition to the above, this author has now published a corollary work, *Israelology: The Missing Link in Systematic Theology*, which deals with opposite viewpoints from the perspective of the theology of Israel. As for the new three-quarter Tribulation view (misnomered as the "Pre-Wrath Rapture View"), see the author's review entitled: *The Pre-Wrath Rapture of the Church.*[1]

[1] Available from Ariel Ministries

For this revised edition, the basic translation used is still the American Standard Version of 1901. However, the archaic language (i.e., *thee*, *thou*, etc.) has been modernized. One exception is that the archaic *ye* has been retained so as to be able to distinguish the second person plural from the singular *you*.

As was the case with the original edition, this revised edition would not have been possible if it was not for the help of specific individuals. My most grateful thanks go out to the following persons: Kathy Hichborn, who typed up the original work onto a computer format, setting the stage for the revisions to take place. The original book was typed up in B.C. (before computer) days and, therefore, it did not exist in disk form and Mrs. Hichborn made this a reality. Only then was it possible to bring in the revisions and then the following served as the proofreaders for the final draft: Archie and Jo Ann Jones, Pauline Ilsen, and Richard D. Sanne. Matthew Lipsey did all of the design work on the cover and the charts for this revised edition. A special thanks is also extended to my former secretary, Roxanne Tretheway, who initially oversaw and supervised all of the stages that finally produced the revised version of this book. The process was completed by Ariel's Executive Director, Richard D. Sanne.

Finally, I am very grateful to the many who have written me over the years with questions based on this book. It is these questions that helped me to sharpen, clarify, and simplify some of my views which, in turn, resulted in this revision.

Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum
Tustin/Irvine, California
March 1, 2003

Part I

Introductory Material

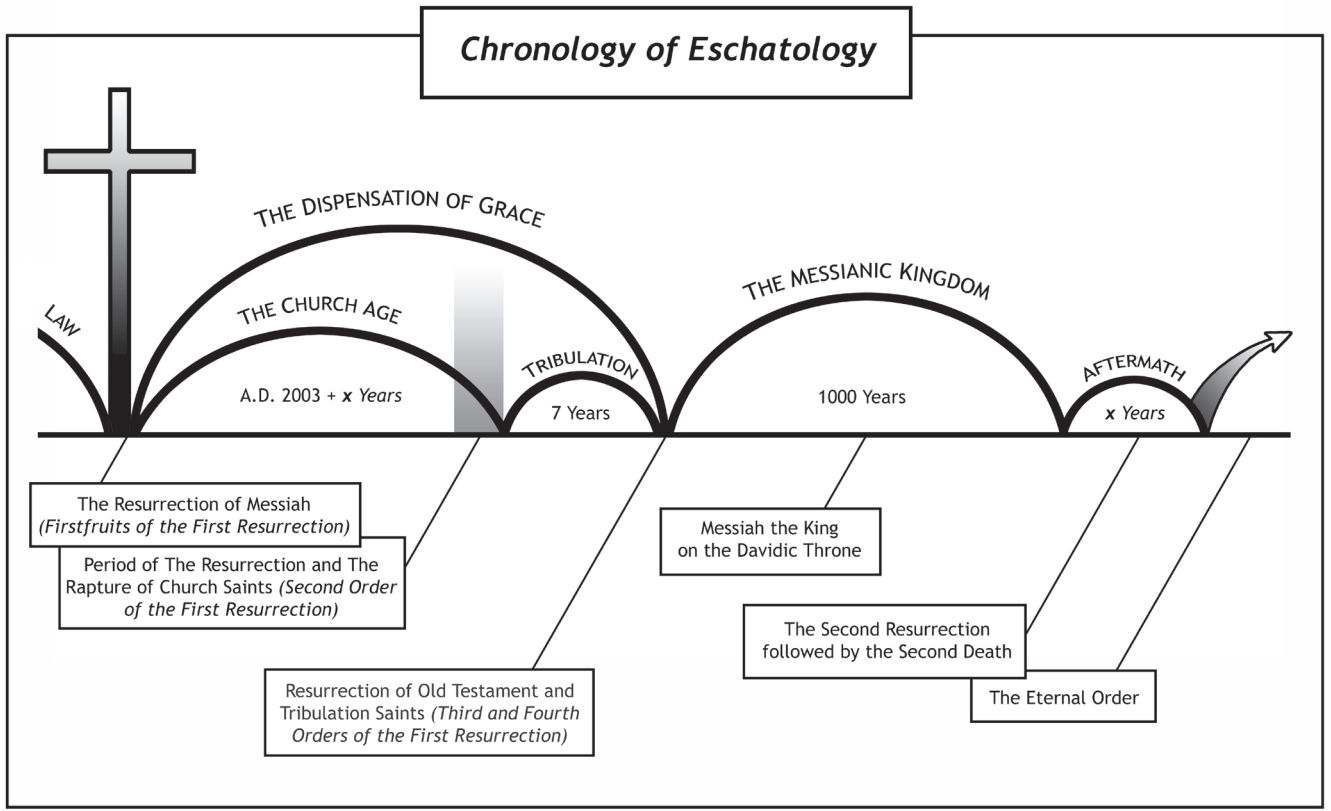

Chronology of Eschatology
LAW
THE DISPENSATION OF GRACE
THE CHURCH AGE
A.D. 2003 + x Years
TRIBULATION
7 Years
THE MESSIANIC KINGDOM
1000 Years
AFTERMATH
x Years
The Resurrection of Messiah (Firstfruits of the First Resurrection)
Period of The Resurrection and The Rapture of Church Saints (Second Order of the First Resurrection)
Resurrection of Old Testament and Tribulation Saints (Third and Fourth Orders of the First Resurrection)
Messiah the King on the Davidic Throne
The Second Resurrection followed by the Second Death
The Eternal Order

Chart #1

ONE

Introduction

This book is a study of prophecy. More specifically, it is a study of *eschatology*, the study of the last days.

This work will examine prophecy chronologically; it will deal with the sequence of events as they are revealed in Scripture. It will deal with the prophecies that are being fulfilled at the present time and with the sequence of events as they unfold in the Tribulation and the Millennium culminating in the Eternal Order.

However, before the specifics can be dealt with, it is first necessary to take up some matters of introduction.

A. The Rules of Interpretation

The first matter of introduction concerns the rules of interpretation, especially those by which the author was guided in formulating this study. All too often Bible expositors have had one set of rules for the interpretation of non-prophetic passages, but have been unable, or refuse, to apply that same set of rules to prophetic passages. In this way prophecy has often suffered at the hands of its enemies; but prophecy has also suffered at the hands of its friends. Even when the same set of rules is applied to prophecy as to other passages, there has often been an inconsistency in the application of the rules, giving way to a tendency to spiritualize and/or sensationalize parts of a passage. This has been done even by those who insist on literal interpretation. Prophecy has thus suffered at the hands of its friends, which in turn has often given prophecy a bad name.

Because this is a book on eschatology and not on hermeneutics, it is impossible to deal with all the rules of interpretation found in a textbook of hermeneutics. Hence, it will be necessary to limit this

study to those rules which are especially relevant to prophecy.

There are four basic rules of interpretation which are keys to understanding the prophetic word.[1] The first is called *The Golden Rule of Interpretation:*

> *When the plain sense of Scripture makes common sense, seek no other sense; therefore, take every word at its primary, ordinary, usual, literal meaning, unless the facts of the immediate context, studied in the light of related passages and axiomatic and fundamental truths, indicate clearly otherwise.*

Simply put, this law states that all biblical passages are to be taken exactly as they read unless there is something in the text indicating that it should be taken some way other than literally. If this law is applied consistently, much of the present-day tangents and "newspaper exegesis" can be avoided, as well as other errors, such as Amillennialism. So when the plain sense of Scripture makes sense, no other sense needs to be sought. As in any language, literal or normal interpretation does not rule out figures of speech, but even these have a literal background. The key point is that the Bible should not be approached on the assumption that it is loaded with symbols and hence hard to understand. It is not. The Bible should be approached with the assumption that this book can be understood just like any other book that is taken literally. Besides figures of speech, the Bible does use symbols, but the symbols are usually explained, and they are explained by the usage of literal words. Unless the text indicates clearly that it should be taken symbolically, the passage should be understood literally. This *Golden Rule of Interpretation* is the first of four basic rules of interpretation and by far the most important. It lays the foundation for the other three.

The second law is called *The Law of Double Reference*. This law observes the fact that often a passage or a block of Scripture is speaking of two different persons or two different events that are separated by a long period of time. In the passage itself they are blended into one picture, and the time gap between the two persons or two events

[1] These four rules were formulated by Dr. David L. Cooper, the late founder and director of the Biblical Research Society.

is not presented by the text itself. The fact that a gap of time exists is known because of other Scriptures, but in that particular text itself the gap of time is not seen. A good example of this law is some of the Old Testament prophecies regarding the First and Second Comings of Messiah. Often these two events are blended into one picture with no indication that there is a gap of time between the First and Second Comings. Zechariah 9:9-10 is a good example of *The Law of Double Reference*. Verse nine is speaking of the First Coming, but verse ten is speaking of the Second Coming. These two comings are blended into one picture with no indication that there is a separation of time between them. Another example is Isaiah 11:1-5. Verses 1-2 speak of the First Coming, while verses 3-5 speak of the Second Coming. Again, the two are blended into one picture with no indication of a gap of time between the two. Because many prophetic passages follow the principle of *The Law of Double Reference*, this is an important law to know.

This law should not be confused with another law often called *double fulfillment.* This author does not accept the validity of the principle of double fulfillment. This law states that one passage may have a near and far view; hence, in a way, it may be fulfilled twice. Isaiah 7:14 is often used as an example of this view. The near view would be a reference to a child being born in Ahaz's day; but the far view is that of a virgin-born child, which is the birth of Messiah. This author, however, does not believe that there is such a thing as double fulfillment. A single passage can refer to one thing only, unless stated otherwise, and if it is prophecy, it can have only one fulfillment unless the text itself states that it can have many fulfillments. *The Law of Double Reference* differs from the law of double fulfillment in that the former states that while two events are blended into one picture, one part of the passage refers to one event and the other part of the passage to the second event. This is the case in Zechariah 9:9-10. Verse nine refers only to the First Coming, while verse ten refers only to the Second Coming; but there is no double fulfillment of both verses. There are not two fulfillments of verse nine and two fulfillments of verse ten. Isaiah 7:14 must either refer to a child in Ahaz's day or to the birth of the Messiah. It cannot refer to both. Isaiah 7:13-17 could be better explained if it is taken as following *The Law of Double Reference* rather than the principle of double fulfillment. Verses 13-14 refer to the virgin birth of the Messiah only. These verses are addressed to

the House of David in general, as can be seen by the usage of plural pronouns in these two verses in the Hebrew text. Verses 15-17 refer to a child in Ahaz's day because the address is to Ahaz alone, as can be seen in the shift to singular pronouns in the Hebrew text. This child is probably Shear-Yashuv of verse three. Hence, the double reference speaks of two persons separated by a period of time. It avoids the pitfalls of double fulfillment. If the verse could refer to a non-virgin birth, then there is no real evidence or prophecy for a real virgin birth in the Old Testament.

The third law is *The Law of Recurrence*. This law describes the fact that in some passages of Scripture there exists the recording of an event followed by a second recording of the same event giving more details to the first. Hence, it often involves two blocks of Scripture. The first block presents a description of an event as it transpires in chronological sequence. This is followed by a second block of Scripture dealing with the same event and the same period of time, but giving further details as to what transpires in the course of the event.

An example of *The Law of Recurrence* in a prophetic passage is Ezekiel 38:1-39:16. Ezekiel 38:1-23 gives a complete account of the invasion of Israel from the north and the subsequent destruction of the invading army. This is followed by the second block of Scripture, Ezekiel 39:1-16, which repeats some of the account given in the first block and gives some added details regarding the destruction of the invading army. Another example is in Isaiah 30-31. Isaiah 30 gives a complete account of the fall of Judah's alliance with Egypt. Chapter 31 simply repeats the prophecy, adding more detail. An example found in a non-prophetic passage is Genesis 1:1-2:25. Genesis 1:1-2:3 records the seven days of creation in strict chronological sequence. The passage ends on the seventh day. Then the second block of Scripture, Genesis 2:4-25, in keeping with *The Law of Recurrence*, goes back to the sixth day to provide added details as to the manner by which Adam and Eve were created. This law also functions in the Book of Revelation. Chapters 6-16 detail the chronological sequence of the events of the Tribulation, ending with Armageddon and the Second Coming. Then chapters 17-18 follow *The Law of Recurrence*: Chapter 17 provides more detail about the first half of the Tribulation and chapter 18 about the second half.

The fourth law is *The Law of the Context,* which states: *A text apart from its context is a pretext.* A verse can only mean what it means in its context and must not be taken out of its context. When it is taken

out of its context, it is often presented as meaning something that it cannot mean within the context. A good example of this is Zechariah 13:6. This verse is often used as a prophecy of the Messiah. Pulled out of its context, it does indeed sound like it refers to Jesus. But the context (Zech. 13:2-6) is speaking of false prophets. Verse six cannot refer to Jesus unless Jesus is taken to be a false prophet. This is the danger of studying a verse by itself rather than in its context. The common saying, "You can prove *anything* by the Bible," is only true when this law is violated.

These are the four basic rules which, if followed, will help in the study of the Scriptures in general and prophecy in particular. In these four principles lies the understanding of the prophetic word as well as the whole Bible. While most expositors apply these laws to non-prophetic passages of the Bible, they often fail to apply them to prophetic portions. This has led to some gross error. The principles of interpretation should be applied consistently to the whole Bible.

B. The Outline of Eschatology

The second thing by way of introduction involves the basic outline of eschatology (see Chart #1). Eschatology proper begins with the sixth dispensation. The cross, which ended the fifth dispensation, the Dispensation of the Law, also began the sixth, the Dispensation of Grace. The Dispensation of Grace is divided into two ages. The *first* is the Church Age (see Chart #3). Viewed from the standpoint of the visible church, it began at Pentecost and will continue until the beginning of the Tribulation period. Viewed from the standpoint of the invisible Church, it began at Pentecost and will continue until the Rapture. The *second* age is the Great Tribulation, which will last for seven years, and will be the last seven years of the Dispensation of Grace (see Charts #4, 5 and 6).

After a short interval following the Tribulation, the last seven years of the Dispensation of Grace will be the seventh dispensation, the Dispensation of the Messianic Kingdom for one thousand years (see Chart #9). Following the Kingdom there will be an aftermath period during which several things occur. Finally, there will be the Eternal Order: eternity. This is eschatology in its basic outline. The particulars, along with detailed charts, will be taken up in this study.

C. The Book of the Revelation

A third matter by way of introduction concerns the Book of the Revelation itself. The purpose of this work is to study the whole scope of Bible prophecy, which involves much more than just the Book of Revelation, but the Book of Revelation will serve as a base. Other portions of Scripture will be brought in at appropriate times as needed to develop the areas chronologically. Hence, as far as this study is concerned, the Book of Revelation will serve as the primary background, and other parts of the Bible will be studied in their appropriate place and order.

1. The Outline of the Book of Revelation

The outline of the Book of Revelation is given by the book itself in 1:19:

> *Write therefore the things which you saw, and the things which are, and the things which shall come to pass hereafter; . . .*

The verse divides the Book of Revelation into three sections: the things that John saw; the things which are; and the things which must come to pass hereafter. Using this threefold division, the Book of Revelation can be outlined as follows:

Introduction - 1:1-3
Salutation - 1:4-8
I. The Things That John Saw - 1:9-20
A. The Glorified Son of Man - 1:9-11
B. The Revelation - 1:12-16
C. The Interpretation - 1:17-20
II. The Things Which Are - 2:1 – 3:22
A. Ephesus - 2:1-7
B. Smyrna - 2:8-11
C. Pergamum - 2:12-17
D. Thyatira - 2:18-29
E. Sardis - 3:1-6
F. Philadelphia - 3:7-13
G. Laodicea - 3:14-22

III. The Things Which Must Come To Pass Hereafter - 4:1 – 22:21
A. Events in Heaven Preceding the Great Tribulation - 4:1 – 5:14
1. The Throne of God - 4:1-11
2. The Lamb and the Seven-Sealed Scroll - 5:1-14
B. The Great Tribulation - 6:1 – 18:24
1. The First Half - 6:1 – 9:21
a. The Seal Judgments - 6:1-17
b. The 144,000 Jews and the Worldwide Revival - 7:1-17
c. The Trumpet Judgments - 8:1 – 9:21
2. Events of the Middle of the Tribulation - 10:1 – 14:20
a. The Little Book - 10:1-11
b. The Tribulation Temple - 11:1-2
c. The Two Witnesses - 11:3-14
d. The Seventh Trumpet - 11:15-19
e. Israel in the Tribulation - 12:1-17
f. The Beast from the Sea - 13:1-10
g. The Beast from the Earth - 13:11-18
h. Midtribulation Announcements - 14:1-20
3. The Second Half - 15:1 – 16:21
a. The Prelude - 15:1-8
b. The Bowl Judgments - 16:1-21
4. Recurrence: The Two Babylons - 17:1 – 18:24
a. Ecclesiastical Babylon (First Half) - 17:1-18
b. Political Babylon (Second Half) - 18:1-24
C. The Second Coming and the Aftermath - 19:1 – 20:3
1. Prelude to the Second Coming - 19:1-10
2. The Second Coming - 19:11-18
3. The Campaign of Armageddon - 19:19
4. Antichrist and the False Prophet - 19:20
5. The Gentiles - 19:21
6. The Binding of Satan - 20:1-3
D. The Messianic Kingdom - 20:4-6
1. The Reign of Messiah - 20:4
2. The First Resurrection - 20:5-6

E. The Aftermath - 20:7-14
1. The Last Revolt - 20:7-10
2. The Great White Throne Judgment - 20:11-14
F. The Eternal Order - 21:1 – 22:5
1. The Passing of the Old Order and the Creation of the New - 21:1-8
2. The Eternal New Jerusalem - 21:9 – 22:5
a. The Establishment of the City - 21:9-10
b. The Description of the City - 21:11 – 22:5

Conclusion - 22:6-21
A. The Authentication - 22:6-9
B. Declarations in the Light of the Revelation - 22:10-15
C. The First Affirmation - 22:16
D. The Invitation - 22:17
E. The Warning - 22:18-19
F. The Second Affirmation - 22:20
G. The Benediction - 22:21

This is the outline of the Book of Revelation that will be followed in this study.

The author of the Book of Revelation is the Apostle John who also authored the Gospel of John and the three Epistles of I, II, and III John.

2. Old and New Things in the Revelation

What is really new in the Revelation? And how much of it is really old, that is, already found in the Old Testament?

The Book of Revelation has no direct quotations from the Old Testament, but it has about 550 references back to the Old Testament. The majority of the things found in the first twenty chapters of the Book of Revelation are found elsewhere in the Old Testament. Only the last two chapters deal with things totally new.

If this is true, what is the importance and contribution of the Book of Revelation? The Old Testament prophecies are scattered throughout the Books of Moses and the various Prophets and Writings. It would have been impossible to develop these prophecies into any chronological sequence of events. The value of the Book of Revelation is not that it provides a lot of new information, but rather that it takes the

scattered Old Testament prophecies and puts them in chronological order so that the sequence of events may be determined. This book provides a framework for the understanding of the order and the sequence of events found in the Old Testament prophecies. This is the reason for so many references to the Old Testament.

However, the material found in the last two chapters is totally new material which describes the Eternal Order. The Old Testament prophets never foresaw anything beyond the Messianic Kingdom. Indeed, the Kingdom was the high point of Old Testament prophecy and no prophet ever saw anything beyond that. But the Eternal Order is the high point of New Testament prophecy, and Revelation 21 and 22 provide new information, as they describe the Eternal Order.

3. The Usage of Symbols in the Revelation

Another important preliminary area is the matter of symbols. The Book of Revelation uses many symbols. The existence of these symbols has led to two extremes. One extreme states that the existence of these symbols shows that this book cannot be understood and must simply be interpreted in terms of a general conflict between good and evil, the good winning out in the end. Beyond this, they say the book is not to be understood in any great detail. This is how the book has suffered from its enemies.

In the second extreme, the symbols are used for unchecked speculation, sensationalism, and all kinds of guesswork in trying to interpret these symbols in terms of current events. Such speculation has resulted in farfetched interpretations, and changes are made as current events change. It has also led to date-setting. In this area, the Book of Revelation has suffered at the hands of its friends.

There is a balance between the two extremes. While the Bible does use many symbols, it is consistent in its usage of symbols. A specific symbol will mean the same thing throughout the Old and New Testaments in the vast majority of cases (though not all).

For this study, the symbols will be examined in accordance with *The Golden Rule of Interpretation*. While recognizing the existence of the symbols, there will be no resorting to guesswork. Rather, this study will proceed on the premise that all the symbols in the Book of Revelation are explained elsewhere: either in a different part of the

Book of Revelation or in some other part of the Bible. There are symbols, but the Bible itself will explain what these symbols mean either by direct statement or through a comparison of the usage of the symbol elsewhere in the Scriptures. The meaning of the symbols will not be determined by speculation.

4. The Introduction to the Revelation—Revelation 1:1-3

Finally, in the area of introductory material, it is necessary to look at the first chapter of the Book of Revelation. This is the first major division of the book, according to 1:19, and it belongs to the realm of *the things that John saw*.

Verses 1-3 contain the introduction to the book:

> *The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show unto his servants, even the things which must shortly come to pass: and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John; who bore witness of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, even of all things that he saw. Blessed is he that reads, and they that hear the words of the prophecy, and keep the things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.*

It has been customary to call this book "The Revelation of John," although the very first verse states that this is *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, and only after a process did it reach John. The revelation given to John originated with God the Father and culminates with the believer. First, the source of the revelation is God the Father, Who gave it to God the Son, Jesus the Messiah. Second, from Him it was conveyed to the third person in the progressive transmission, an unnamed angel. Angels were often used in biblical revelation, especially in the revelation of prophecy. Angels were used for the revelation of the Law of Moses (Acts 7:53; Gal. 3:19; Heb. 2:2). They were active in the presenting of prophetic truth to Daniel (7:16-27; 8:16-26; 9:20-27; 10:1-12:13) and to Zechariah (1:9; 2:3; 4:1, 5; 5:5; 6:4, 5). Angels were used to announce the birth of John to Zacharias (Lk. 1:11-20) and the birth of Jesus to Mary (Lk. 1:26-38) and to Joseph (Mat. 1:20-21). Since angels were frequently used in the revelation of prophecy, it is not unusual to find angels involved in revealing the events and the contents of the Book of Revelation, the crowning book of prophecy. Angels will play

a prominent role in this book, not only in revealing prophecy to John, but also in carrying out the prophecies. From the angel it was given to the fourth person in the progression, the Apostle John, who was commanded to write down the Revelation in a book. John was a recipient of divine inspiration and through the Holy Spirit recorded the words exactly as God desired and free from error as far as the original manuscript is concerned (v. 2). The Revelation has been put into writing in order for it to be conveyed to the fifth person, the believer.

Verse one further states that the things that are being revealed *must shortly come to pass.* This is often misunderstood to mean that all the prophecies of the book were to be fulfilled soon after they were given. Others use this phrase to teach that since these prophecies were not fulfilled soon after they were given, it is not necessary to take these prophecies too seriously. However, the word *shortly* simply means that once the day for fulfillment comes, there will be no delay in its execution.

Verse three puts an obligation on the fifth person of the progression, the believer, while at the same time giving a promise. The obligation is for the believer to study this book. The promise is one of blessing. This is the only book in the Bible that promises a blessing to those who study it. There are many blessings of God which are unconditional, and the believer is entitled to them simply by virtue of the fact that he is a believer. However, other blessings of God are conditional, and the blessing of God available to the believer who studies this book is one of them. Studying prophecy gives one a love and longing for the return of the Messiah. Those believers who love and look for His return are promised a special crown, one which will be discussed later. Believers often rob themselves of certain blessings available to them because they fail to take God's conditional aspects seriously. The promise attached to the study of the Book of Revelation is one of these conditional blessings. While blessings are available for the study of God's Word in general, a unique blessing is available through the study of this particular book. The reason is easy to understand. Since so much of this book is based on the Old Testament, a proper study of it will require a study of the Old Testament, resulting in a more comprehensive knowledge of the whole Bible.

Not only is the blessing to those who *read* and *hear* the words of the book, but also to those who *keep the things which are written*.

The word for *keep* also means *watch*, the sense in which it should be taken here. The believer, after reading and listening to what the Book of Revelation is teaching, should also be watching for these things to come to pass and be on the alert for the fulfillment of these things. The same admonition to watch is given in the Olivet Discourse, in Matthew 24:42-44 and 25:13.

5. The Salutation—Revelation 1:4-8

The introduction to the Book of Revelation is followed by the salutation in verses 4-8:

> *John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace, from him who is and who was and who is to come; and from the seven Spirits that are before his throne; and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loves us, and loosed us from our sins by his blood; and he made us to be a kingdom, to be priests unto his God and Father; to him be the glory and the dominion for ever and ever. Amen. Behold, he comes with the clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they that pierced him; and all the tribes of the earth shall mourn over him. Even so, Amen. I am the Alpha and the Omega, says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.*

Verse 4a states to whom this book is being written, especially chapters two and three of the book: *the seven churches that are in Asia.* John uses the Greek definite article *the*, indicating totality. However, history shows that there were more than just these seven churches in Asia that are mentioned in the context. One church in Asia not mentioned is the Church at Colossae. Though it was in Asia, it is not listed among the seven. So how are these seven churches with the definite article to be understood? The number seven throughout Scripture signifies completeness. Even in this chapter the number seven will be used again in this way with a different subject. The point here, then, is that this is a message to the whole church. When John addresses himself to *the seven* churches of Asia, he is signifying that he is writing to the whole church. All believers are to learn from what will be written to the seven churches of Asia.

Verses 4b-5a indicate again that John was a secondary author. The primary author is the Triune God. The originator was God the Father, in verse one, and is here described as the One *who is and who was and who is to come.* Mentioned next is the Holy Spirit, Who is the source of revelation and inspiration (II Pet. 1:20-21). The Holy Spirit is described as *the seven Spirits that are before his throne.* Again, the definite article *the* is used with the number seven to signify totality and completeness. It is a reference to Isaiah 11:2 where the seven attributes of the Holy Spirit are described. Finally, the second Person in the progression found in verse one is mentioned: *and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.*

Then, in verses 5b-6, John turns to glorify the Son with praise and thanksgiving to Him because: first, He loved us; second, He *loosed us from our sins by His blood*; third, He *made us to be a kingdom*; fourth, He made us *to be priests* unto God the Father; and fifth, *to Him be the glory and the dominion for ever and ever*.

While verse 19 gives the outline of the book, verse seven gives the *theme* of the book, which is the Second Coming of the Messiah:

> *Behold, he comes with the clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they that pierced him; and all the tribes of the earth shall mourn over him. Even so, Amen.*

The return of Jesus to this earth is the central theme of this book. It will deal with events leading up to the Second Coming, events accompanying the Second Coming, and events following the Second Coming.

Finally, in verse eight, Jesus describes Himself as the Eternal One, encompassing the beginning and the end. He is the over-all sovereign God Who is in control of history and will bring to pass the events described in the Revelation.

6. The Things that John Saw—Revelation 1:9-20

Verses 9-20 comprise the first major section of the Revelation, *the things that John saw.* What John saw was the glorified *son of man.* This passage can be subdivided into three sections.

First: in verses 9-11, there is the introduction given to John:

> *I John, your brother and partaker with you in the tribulation and kingdom and patience which are in Jesus, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet saying, what you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches: unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamum, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.*

In verse nine, John states that he was on the island of Patmos at the time of the receiving of the Revelation. Patmos is an island off the west coast of present-day Turkey, and it was an island for exiles banished there by the Roman government. This was true in the case of John. Therefore, he identifies himself as a *partaker with you in the tribulation*. This was the period of the persecution of the church by the Emperor Domitian, and during this persecution John was banished to Patmos. That this was the cause of the banishment is clearly stated: *for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.* In verse ten, he describes that on one *Lord's day*, or perhaps better translated "lordy day," being under the control of the Holy Spirit, he heard a magnificent voice so great that he compared it to a trumpet. In the Greek, the term translated "Lord" is not a noun, but an adjective. It does not refer to a specific day of the week, such as the Sabbath (Saturday) or Sunday. Rather, it was a day in which John was enraptured by prophetic and divine ecstasy and received divine revelation. It was a day in which he fell under the control of the Holy Spirit and was given prophetic inspiration. Thus, for him, it was a "lordy day." In verse 11 is a commission to write what he saw to the seven churches, followed by a list of where these churches were to be found.

Second: in verses 12-16, there is the Revelation to John that included the actual things John saw:

> *And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the candlesticks one like unto a son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about at the breasts with a golden girdle. And his head and his hair were white as white wool, white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto burnished brass, as if it had*

> *been refined in a furnace; and his voice as the voice of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth proceeded a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shines in his strength.*

When John turned around to see the owner of the voice, he saw a vision of Jesus that he had never seen before.[2] He saw Jesus as the Glorified Son of Man. The different figures used in describing the Glorified Son of Man all come from the Old Testament. In essence, they describe the Messiah in His third office, that of king. Jesus holds three offices: prophet, priest, and king. However, He does not function in all three offices contemporaneously or simultaneously, but rather chronologically. His *first* office was that of prophet and He functioned in that office during His First Coming. The *second* office is that of a priest. He is functioning in that role now, in His present position at the right hand of God the Father as the High Priest of the believer. When He returns, He will begin to function in His *third* role, that of a king. The Messiah has all three offices, but He does not function in all three roles simultaneously. He has functioned as a prophet in the past. He is now functioning as a priest. In the future He will function in His office as a king. John's vision of Jesus is that of a king, but a king has many roles, one of which is to serve as a judge. The various figures used here describe Him as a king in His role as a judge, for He is seen as about to come and judge the world at His Second Coming. A sub-theme of this book is judgment; the whole book deals with one judgment after another. Furthermore, Jesus is seen to be among the seven lampstands. Here we find one of the many symbols used in the book. As has been stated earlier, every symbol in this book will be explained either in the book itself or elsewhere in the Scriptures. In this case, the meaning is explained in verse 20, where it states that the seven lampstands represent the seven churches. The picture, then, is of Jesus in the midst of the churches ready to move out in judgment.

Third: in verses 17-20, John received the *interpretation* of what he had seen. In verses 17-18, there is the *identification* of Whom he saw:

> *And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as one dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying, Fear not; I am the*

[2] However, John did see aspects of this glory at the Transfiguration.

> *first and the last, and the Living one; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.*

In the identification, Jesus identifies Himself as the Eternal One (*I am the first and the last)* and the Resurrected One (*I was dead, and behold, I am alive)*, and also the conqueror of death and Hell. In verse 19, John received the *instruction:*

> *Write therefore the things which you saw, and the things which are; and the things which shall come to pass hereafter...*

In this directive, he received the outline of the book that he was about to write. It is a three-fold division: *the things which you saw* (1:9-20); *the things which are* (2:1-3:22); and *the things which shall come to pass hereafter* (4:1-22:21). The latter are the things that follow *the things which are*. Then, in verse 20, is an *explanation* of *the things which are*:

> *The mystery*[3] *of the seven stars which you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks are seven churches.*

This verse explains two of the figures used earlier. The seven lampstands represent the seven churches. The seven stars of verse 16 are the seven angels appointed to these churches. While the figure of the lampstand is not used elsewhere in the Scriptures,[4] the stars as symbols of angels are. With one exception, wherever the word "star" is used symbolically, it is always a symbol of an angel. This is true in the Old Testament. This is also true in the New Testament, including the various parts of the Book of Revelation.

With this verse the first major section of the Book of Revelation is completed: *the things that John saw.*

---

[3] The term *mystery*, as used in the New Testament, always refers to something totally unknown in the Old Testament but revealed for the first time in the New (Mat. 13:11, 35; Rom. 16:25-26; I Cor. 2:7; Eph. 3:4-5, 9; Col. 1:26). For details, see Appendix VI, The Eight Mysteries of the New Testament.

[4] What is found in the Old Testament and used symbolically is the seven-branched lampstand. What is new here is seven individual lampstands, each one representing a specific local church.

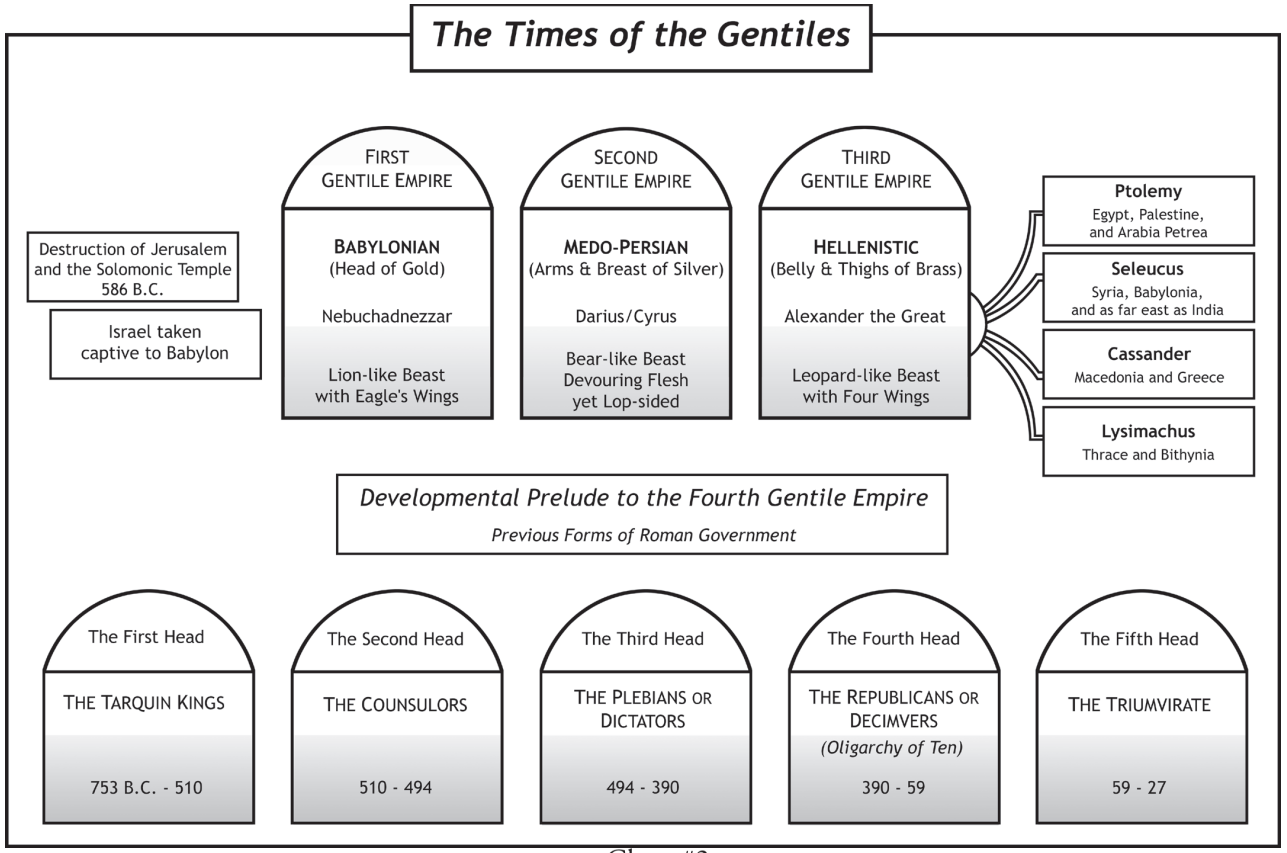

The Times of the Gentiles
Destruction of Jerusalem and the Solomonic Temple 586 B.C.
Israel taken captive to Babylon
FIRST GENTILE EMPIRE
BABYLONIAN (Head of Gold)
Nebuchadnezzar
Lion-like Beast with Eagle's Wings
SECOND GENTILE EMPIRE
MEDO-PERSIAN (Arms & Breast of Silver)
Darius/Cyrus
Bear-like Beast Devouring Flesh yet Lop-sided
THIRD GENTILE EMPIRE
HELLENISTIC (Belly & Thighs of Brass)
Alexander the Great
Leopard-like Beast with Four Wings
Ptolemy
Egypt, Palestine, and Arabia Petrea
Seleucus
Syria, Babylonia, and as far east as India
Cassander
Macedonia and Greece
Lysimachus
Thrace and Bithynia
Developmental Prelude to the Fourth Gentile Empire
Previous Forms of Roman Government
The First Head
THE TARQUIN KINGS
753 B.C. - 510
The Second Head
THE COUNSULORS
510 - 494
The Third Head
THE PLEBIANS OR DICTATORS
494 - 390
The Fourth Head
THE REPUBLICANS OR DECIMVERS
(Oligarchy of Ten)
390 - 59
The Fifth Head
THE TRIUMVIRATE
59 - 27

Chart #2a

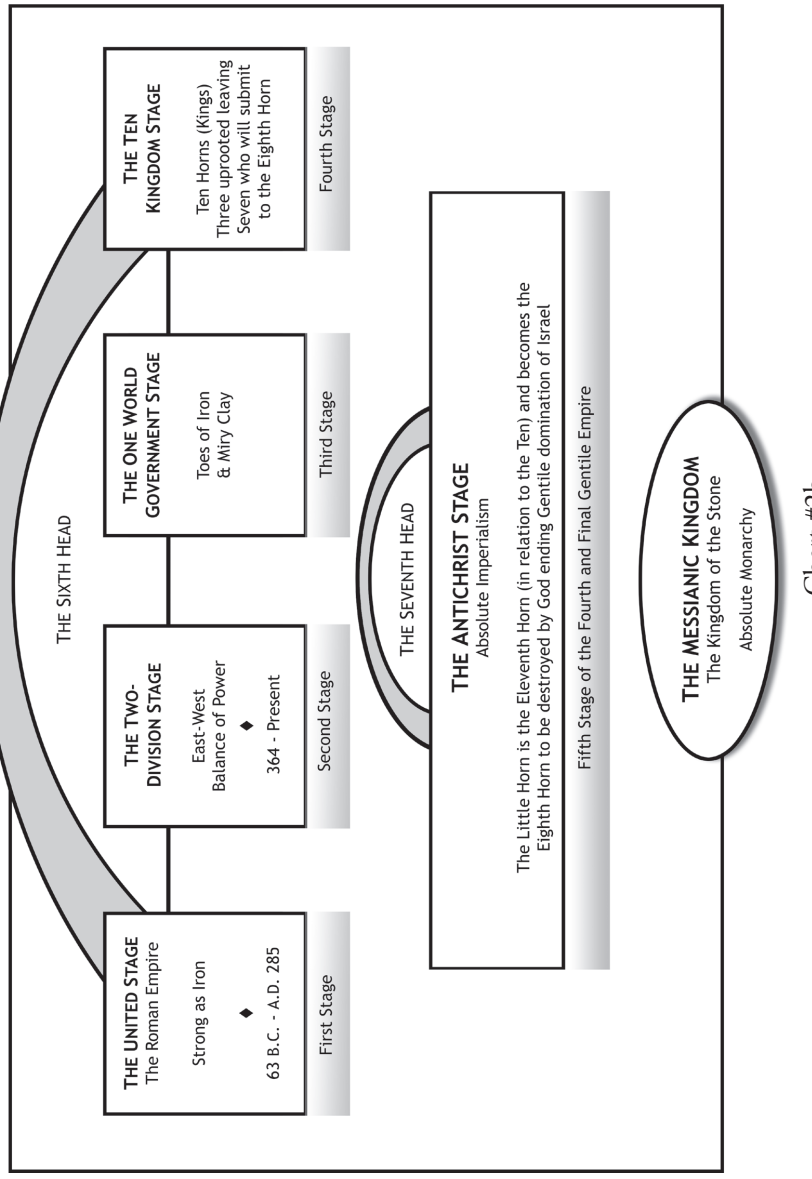

THE SIXTH HEAD
THE UNITED STAGE
The Roman Empire
Strong as Iron
◆
63 B.C. - A.D. 285
First Stage
THE TWO-DIVISION STAGE
East-West
Balance of Power
◆
364 - Present
Second Stage
THE ONE WORLD GOVERNMENT STAGE
Toes of Iron
& Miry Clay
Third Stage
THE TEN KINGDOM STAGE
Ten Horns (Kings)
Three uprooted leaving
Seven who will submit
to the Eighth Horn
Fourth Stage
THE SEVENTH HEAD
THE ANTICHRIST STAGE
Absolute Imperialism
The Little Horn is the Eleventh Horn (in relation to the Ten) and becomes the
Eighth Horn to be destroyed by God ending Gentile domination of Israel
Fifth Stage of the Fourth and Final Gentile Empire
THE MESSIANIC KINGDOM
The Kingdom of the Stone
Absolute Monarchy

Chart #2b

TWO

The Times of the Gentiles

Another area of introductory material needed for the understanding of prophecy involves the understanding of the nature and the course of the Times of the Gentiles. A definition of the Times of the Gentiles can be gleaned from Luke 21:24:

> *And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led captive into all the nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.*

The Times of the Gentiles can best be defined as that long period of time from the Babylonian Empire to the Second Coming of the Messiah during which time the Gentiles have dominance over the City of Jerusalem. This does not rule out temporary Jewish control of the city, but all such Jewish control will be temporary until the Second Coming. Such temporary control was exercised during the Maccabbean Period (164-63 B.C.), the First Jewish Revolt against Rome (A.D. 66-70), the Second Jewish Revolt (the Bar Cochba Revolt) against Rome (A.D. 132-135), and since 1967 as a result of the Six Day War. This, too, is temporary, as Gentiles will yet tread Jerusalem down for at least another 3½ years (Rev. 11:1-2). Any Jewish takeover of the City of Jerusalem before the Second Coming must therefore be viewed as a temporary one and does not mean that the Times of the Gentiles have ended. The Times of the Gentiles can only end when the Gentiles can no longer tread down the City of Jerusalem.

To understand the course of the Times of the Gentiles, four passages will need to be studied and then combined. Each subsequent passage builds and elaborates on the previous passage(s).

A. Daniel 2:31-45

The basic content of Nebuchadnezzar's dream is in verses 31-35:

> *You, O king, saw, and, behold, a great image. This image, which was mighty, and whose brightness was excellent, stood before you; and the aspect thereof was terrible. As for this image, its head was of fine gold, its breast and its arms of silver, its belly and its thighs of brass, its legs of iron, its feet part of iron, and part of clay. You saw till that a stone was cut without hands, which smote the image upon its feet that were of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken in pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind carried them away, so that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.*

After a general description of the awesomeness of the image (v. 31), Daniel describes the composition of the image (vv. 32-33). The image is described as having a head of gold, the breast and arms composed of silver, the belly and thighs of brass, legs of iron, culminating with the feet and toes of part iron and part clay. Two things should be noted concerning these metals: *first*, they increase in strength; but *second*, they decrease in value. The fulfillment will be in the decrease of the character of authority and rule: Babylon was an absolute monarchy with the monarch above the law; with Medo-Persia the monarch was not above the law and he did not have the authority to change his own decrees; the Hellenic kings had no dynastic or royal right to rule, and ruled by force of conquest and personal gifts; and Roman imperialism was a republic which degenerated into mob rule merging with the imperial form of government. Yet there will be an increase in strength of one empire over the other. Then the image is destroyed by a stone, and the stone smites the image on its feet (vv. 34-35a). Then, with the image destroyed, the stone becomes a great mountain that fills the entire earth (v. 35b). The stone was *cut without hands*, emphasizing His divine origin.

Having thus described the awesome image that Nebuchadnezzar dreamed, Daniel proceeded to give the interpretation in verses 36-45:

This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king. You, O king, are king of kings, unto whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, and the strength, and the glory; and wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the birds of the heavens has he given into your hand, and has made you to rule over them all: you are the head of gold. And after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to you; and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron, forasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and subdues all things; and as iron that crushes all these, shall it break in pieces and crush. And whereas you saw the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, it shall be a divided kingdom; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as you saw the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas you saw the iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men; but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron does not mingle with clay. And in the days of those kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as you saw that a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God has made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.

After the declaration of the interpretation (v. 36), Daniel interprets the meaning of the head of gold (vv. 37-38) as being Nebuchadnezzar, the head of the Babylonian Empire. It was with this empire that the Times of the Gentiles began, when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem and the Solomonic Temple in 586 B.C. Thus Babylon was the first of the four Gentile empires to dominate Jerusalem. The actual grant given to Nebuchadnezzar included the whole inhabited earth, but he did not choose to exercise this rule. This fact is affirmed by

Jeremiah 27:5-8 and Ezekiel 26:7-14.

The two arms of silver united into the breast of silver represents the two nations of the Medes and the Persians, who established the Medo-Persian Empire (v. 39a). It is declared to be *inferior* to the Babylonian Empire. It lacked the inner unity of Babylon because the Medes and the Persians, though united, never fused into one people, and the government was not above the mistakes of the law.

The Medo-Persian Empire was followed by the Greek or Hellenistic Empire symbolized by the belly and two thighs of brass (v. 39b), for the third territorially embraced both east and west. The two thighs may also represent Syria and Egypt, which arose out of the Hellenistic Empire and controlled Jewish territory and Jerusalem. Its grant was the same as that of Babylon, but like Babylon, it did not choose to exercise and take that grant.

The rest of the image represents the Fourth Gentile Empire (vv. 40-43). This Fourth Empire goes through several stages, three of which are presented in this text. First there is the United Stage (v. 40). But this United Stage gives way to the Two Division Stage (v. 41) which still has the strength of iron. Eventually, however, the Fourth Gentile Empire gives way to a Ten Division Stage, as is seen in the ten toes (vv. 42-43) being composed of iron and clay. Part of this Ten Division Stage will be strong and part will be brittle and weak. The lack of cohesiveness is especially evident in the toes. Unity is impossible and the ten divisions take place because the different elements will not coalesce. The Fourth Gentile Empire is unique from all the previous ones. It totally subdues and crushes all that precedes it. It is the Fourth Gentile Empire that is particularly emphasized by the text dealing with the Times of the Gentiles.

However, the fifth empire, that will follow it, will not be Gentile but Jewish (vv. 44-45). Two prominent symbols are used here, and they are consistent with their usage elsewhere. Whenever the word *stone* is used symbolically, it is always a symbol of the Second Person of the Trinity, God the Son, the Lord Jesus, the Messiah of Israel. Whenever the word *mountain* is used symbolically, it is always a symbol of a king, kingdom, or throne. Thus, following the Fourth Gentile Empire, God will set up His own Kingdom. The Kingdom is set up during the Ten Division Stage (v. 44a), and this brings to an end the domination of the other kingdoms (v. 44b). In the end the image of Gentile domination

will be smashed at the Second Coming. Once Gentile domination is thus smashed by the Messianic Stone, the Kingdom of God is set up, and it is set up by this Stone.

To summarize the first passage dealing with the Times of the Gentiles, this is a period of time when four Gentile empires will follow one another in sequence, with the Fourth Empire going through several different stages. But eventually this will give way to God's setting up His own Kingdom. While the Gentile empires are of human origin, the Kingdom of the Stone is of divine origin. While the Gentile empires are all temporary, God's Kingdom is eternal.

What Daniel two teaches can be charted out as follows:

1. The Babylonian Empire
2. The Medo-Persian Empire
3. The Hellenistic Empire
4. The Fourth Empire
    a. The United Stage
    b. The Two Division Stage
    c. The Ten Division Stage
5. The Messianic Kingdom

B. Daniel 7:1-28

The second passage is Daniel 7:1-28. Verses 1-14 describe four visions that Daniel saw:

> *In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream and told the sum of the matters. Daniel spoke and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of heaven broke forth upon the great sea. And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another. The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked and it was lifted up from the earth, and made to stand upon two feet as a man; and a man's heart was given to it. And behold, another beast, a second, like to a bear; and it was raised up on one side, and three ribs were in its mouth between its teeth: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh. After this I beheld, and lo, another, like a leopard,*

> *which had upon its back four wings of a bird; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it. After this I saw in the night-visions, and behold, a fourth beast, terrible and powerful, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth; it devoured and broke in pieces, and stamped the residue with its feet: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another horn, a little one, before which three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things. I beheld till thrones were placed, and one that was ancient of days did sit: his raiment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames, and the wheels thereof burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousands of thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened. I beheld at that time because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake; I beheld even till the beast was slain, and its body destroyed, and it was given to be burned with fire. And as for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time. I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man, and he came even to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.*

After giving the time and location of the four visions (v. 1), in verses 2-6 the *first vision* is described. It begins with a vision of the Great Sea (the Mediterranean), representing the Gentile world (Is. 17:12-13; Mat. 13:47-50; Rev. 13:1; 17:1, 15), troubled by the four winds (v. 2). The number is the same as the Gentile empires, while the winds themselves point to God's sovereignty and providence. Suddenly, four beasts arise from this sea, each one different from the other (v. 3). All four are Gentile and all

four arise out of the Mediterranean area.

The first beast is eagle-winged and lion-like (v. 4), representing the Babylonian Empire (Jer. 4:7; 48:40; 49:19, 22; 50:17, 44; Ezek. 17:3). The latter part of verse four is probably a reference to Nebuchadnezzar's experience recorded in Daniel 4:1-37. As much as possible that a man could become a beast, Nebuchadnezzar became one; as close as a beast could become a man, so did Babylon eventually lose its beast-like nature. Babylon eventually lost its beast-like nature as it moved from lust of conquest to the building of culture.

The second beast is bear-like and represents the Medo-Persian Empire (v. 5). The bear is lopsided, being raised up on one side; for although the Medes and the Persians were confederates, the Persians were by far the dominant power and it was a lopsided alliance. Furthermore, the bear is found to have three ribs in its mouth, having devoured the flesh. Historically, these three ribs represent the three kingdoms conquered by the Medo-Persian forces giving them their empire status: Lydia, Babylonia, and Egypt. The bear is less majestic than the lion and is bulky and weighty. Medo-Persia conquered by sheer force of numbers.

The third beast is leopard-like, representing the Hellenistic Empire (v. 6). The leopard is also less majestic than the lion and less grand than the bear but is swifter than both. With leopard-like speed Alexander the Great conquered the Medo-Persian Empire and greatly extended the Hellenistic Empire. At his death, however, the empire split into four kingdoms. The four wings represent the four kingdoms rising out of Alexander's empire, and the four heads represent the four generals who took control of the four kingdoms: Ptolemy over Egypt, Israel and Arabia Petrea; Seleucus over Syria, Babylonia, and as far east as India; Cassander over Macedonia and Greece; and Lysimachus over Thrace and Bithynia.

The *second vision*, found in verses 7-8, describes the fourth beast. Unlike the others, it is nondescript. While the others are given animal-like descriptions, none is given for this one. This fourth beast is described as being diverse, emphatically different from all the others. It completely subdues and breaks in pieces all that precedes it. It appears as far more ferocious than the previous three empires. The fourth beast has ten horns. But while it begins with ten horns, an eleventh horn arises, *the little horn*, that uproots three of the ten others. Having uprooted the

other three, it begins to speak great things. With the uprooting of three horns, seven of the original remain, and the little horn is now an eighth, rather than an eleventh. Once again, as in Daniel two, the uniqueness of the Fourth Empire is emphasized; it is stated that this empire will go through several stages. The interpretation will be discussed later. But for now it is enough to note that the fourth beast does represent a Fourth Gentile Empire.

The *third vision* is found in verses 9-12. This third vision takes place in Heaven. In verses 9-10 the vision is of the Throne of God the Father, Who is described under the title of the *Ancient of Days*. He is viewed as a judge, and the book of judgment is opened. He is surrounded by myriads of angels who will be responsible to carry out these judgments. What is being judged is the Fourth Gentile Empire (vv. 11-12). In verse 11, it is the fourth beast, particularly the little horn, that is judged and destroyed. As for the other three (v. 12), two things are stated: *first*, their dominion was taken away; and *second*, their lives were prolonged for a season and a time. The exact meaning of this will be discussed under the third passage relating to the Times of the Gentiles. The third vision is of God the Father, ready to move out in judgment against the Fourth Empire.

Verses 13-14 contain the *fourth vision*. It describes the setting up of the Kingdom of God following the destruction of the Fourth Gentile Empire. The sequence is that of the Second Coming (v. 13) followed by the Messianic Kingdom (v. 14).

Having described the four visions which he saw, which present essentially the same overview of the four Gentile empires as was found in Daniel two, he now gives the interpretation in verses 15-27. The major emphasis will be upon the Fourth Empire:

> *As for me, Daniel, my spirit was grieved in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me. I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth concerning all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things. These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, that shall arise out of the earth. But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever. Then I desired to know the truth concerning the fourth beast, which was diverse from all of them, exceeding terrible,*

whose teeth were of iron, and its nails of brass; which devoured, broke in pieces, and stamped the residue with its feet; and concerning the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn which came up, and before which three fell, even that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spoke great things, whose look was more stout than its fellows. I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High, and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be a fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all the kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. And as for the ten horns, out of this kingdom shall ten kings arise: and another shall arise after them; and he shall be diverse from the former, and he shall put down three kings. And he shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High; and he shall think to change the times and the law; and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and half a time. But the judgment shall be set, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High: his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.

After Daniel requests the interpretation, in verses 15-16, he is given a summary interpretation in verses 17-18. In verse 17, Daniel is told that these four beasts represent four kingdoms. Nevertheless, it is the servants of the Most High who will possess the kingdom, for whatever will be possessed by the four Gentile empires will be only temporary (v. 18). Whereas earlier the four beasts arose out of the sea, here they arise out of the earth. Coming out of the *sea* emphasizes their Gentile identity. Arising out of the *earth* emphasizes their humanity: these are human, not divine, kingdoms.

Having received this summary interpretation, in verses 19-22 Daniel requests further interpretation regarding the fourth beast. In making this request Daniel further describes what he saw regarding the fourth beast.

In verse 19, its diverseness is pointed out. It is important to note how the diverseness of the Fourth Empire is continually emphasized. For this diverseness Daniel seeks a meaning. He further wishes to know the meaning of the ten horns (v. 20a) and finally the little horn (vv. 20b-22). In requesting this, Daniel gives further information regarding the activity of the little horn: he causes three of the ten horns to fall (v. 20b); he speaks great things (v. 20c); he wars against the saints and is allowed to prevail over them (v. 21). But finally he is personally defeated by the coming of the Ancient of Days. Once the judgment is passed on the little horn by the Ancient of Days, he will be done away with and the kingdom will pass over to the saints.

Having made his request, in verses 23-26 Daniel is given the interpretation of the fourth beast. As in Daniel two, the Fourth Empire is seen as going through several stages, though not always the same stages as found in chapter two. In verse 23a, the Fourth Empire is seen in its United Stage, and it is in this first stage that its diverseness from the previous three empires is seen. This is followed by the second stage, that of a one-world government, for in verse 23b it states that the Fourth Empire will devour the *whole* earth. This will be followed by the Ten Kingdom Stage (v. 24a) which, in turn, will be followed by the little horn, or the Antichrist Stage (vv. 24b-26). These verses state that he arises after the Ten Division Stage (v. 24b). While the Fourth Empire is diverse from the previous three, the little horn is diverse from the other ten (v. 24c). He eventually puts down three of these kings (v. 24d). Verse 25 again points out his speaking great things as seen here in his speaking against God and against the saints. He seeks to change the times and the seasons, and he will be allowed to rule for only *a time, times, and half a time,* which from other passages (Dan. 9:27; 12:7; Rev. 11:2, 3; 12:6, 14; 13:5) means 3½ years. But finally his domination is destroyed (v. 26).

With the destruction of the little horn, the Messianic Kingdom is set up for the saints (v. 27). The *saints* in Daniel refers to righteous Israel, or the Remnant of Israel, and not to the Church. The chapter ends with Daniel's conclusion regarding his reaction to what he has just seen (v. 28).

Daniel seven, then, further develops with greater detail what was given in chapter two, especially in relation to the Fourth Empire. In chart form the information found in chapter seven could be viewed as follows:

1. The Babylonian Empire
2. The Medo-Persian Empire
3. The Hellenistic Empire
    a. The United Stage
    b. The Four Division Stage
4. The Fourth Empire
    a. The United Stage
    b. The One World Government Stage
    c. The Ten Division Stage
    d. The Antichrist Stage
5. The Messianic Kingdom

C. *Summary and Combination of Daniel Chapters Two and Seven*

In order to clearly understand the Times of the Gentiles, the two chapters of Daniel two and seven must be compared before looking at the two other passages involved. Daniel two and seven describe the four Gentile empires, with an emphasis on the last, which goes through several stages. Outlined side-by-side, the comparison would be as follows:

Daniel Two	Daniel Seven
1. The Babylonian Empire	1. The Babylonian Empire
2. The Medo-Persian Empire	2. The Medo-Persian Empire
3. The Hellenistic Empire	3. The Hellenistic Empire
	a. The United Stage
	b. The Four Division Stage
4. The Fourth Empire	4. The Fourth Empire
a. The United Stage	a. The United Stage
b. The Two Division Stage	b. The One World Government Stage
c. The Ten Division Stage	c. The Ten Division Stage
	d. The Antichrist Stage
5. The Messianic Kingdom	5. The Messianic Kingdom

In most of the features the two passages present the same thing. Both agree that there are to be four Gentile empires, one following the other, culminating with the destruction of the Fourth Empire by the Messiah and the setting up of the Messianic Kingdom. Both passages point out the diverseness of the fourth kingdom and the fact that it goes through several stages. It is in these stages that there is a slight difference between the two texts.

Daniel two shows three stages of the Fourth Empire, two of which are mentioned by Daniel seven. Daniel seven mentions four stages of the Fourth Empire, two of which are mentioned by Daniel two. Combining the two charts together, they would be viewed as follows:

1. The Babylonian Empire
2. The Medo-Persian Empire
3. The Hellenistic Empire
    a. The United Stage
    b. The Four Division Stage
4. The Fourth Empire
    a. The United Stage
    b. The Two Division Stage
    c. The One World Government Stage
    d. The Ten Division Stage
    e. The Antichrist Stage
5. The Messianic Kingdom

1. The Summary of the First Three Empires

The *first* empire is the Babylonian Empire, which included the head of gold and the lion-like beast. Different aspects of this empire are depicted by Daniel 1:1-5:30 and 7:4. The *second* empire is the Medo-Persian Empire, represented by the arms and breast of silver and the bear-like beast. Different aspects of this empire are described in Daniel 2:39a; 5:31-6:28; 7:5; 8:1-7; and 10:1-11:2. This is followed by the *third* empire, the Hellenistic Empire, represented by the belly of brass and the leopard-like beast. It started out as a unit under Alexander the Great but split into four divisions at his death. This empire is subject to considerable revelation in Daniel 2:39b; 7:6; 8:7-27; and 11:3-35.

2. The Fourth Empire—Imperialism

This is followed by the Fourth Empire, which is emphasized as being diverse from all the others. Daniel describes this empire in 2:40-43; 7:7-12, 19-27; 9:27; and 11:36-45. It goes through five different stages, with Rome being merely the first of these five stages, for Rome cannot be viewed as the entire Fourth Empire. What made the Fourth Empire, beginning with Rome, different from all the previous empires? The key difference was in the type of government initiated by Rome, which was a government of *imperialism.* When the Babylonians conquered an area, they did not set up Babylonian rulers, but set up nationals to rule. In its conquest of Judah, Babylon first set up Zedekiah, and later Gedaliah was appointed to rule. Under Medo-Persia the same thing was done, and Jewish governors such as Zerubbabel and Nehemiah ruled. The Hellenists worked in the same way. Instead of sending in Greeks to rule, they allowed the Jewish high priests to rule throughout the period of Greek domination.

But Rome began a new system called *imperialism*. This is what made the Fourth Empire *diverse* from all the others. When Rome conquered, Romans were sent in to rule (e.g., Pontius Pilate, Felix, Festus). This was the policy of imperialism. Thus, a better name for the Fourth Empire would be "imperialism" rather than Rome, for Rome was merely the first of five stages of the Fourth Empire of Imperialism. Hence, the Fourth Empire will be referred to as the Imperialistic Empire.

Both Daniel passages make it clear that the Fourth Gentile Empire begins with the end of the third and continues until Messiah comes to set up His Kingdom. The long continuous existence of the Imperialistic Empire is to go through five successive stages, and it is now necessary to study the five stages individually in order to see where history fits in this development.

a. The United Stage—Rome

The first stage was the United Stage, which was the Roman Empire. While it has been common to call the Fourth Gentile Empire by that name, it is only true of the first stage of the Gentile Empire of Imperialism. It has become customary to think in terms of a revival of the old Roman Empire, but no such concept is really warranted. It is more consistent to simply follow through the five stages with the Roman Empire being the

first stage, or the United Stage, which lasted from 63 B.C. to A.D. 364. Neither of the Daniel passages allows for gaps or for a revival of the Old Roman Empire.

b. The Two Division Stage

The second stage of the Empire of Imperialism was the Two Division Stage. This stage was foreseen by Daniel two, but not by Daniel seven. It is a stage that began in A.D. 364 when Emperor Valentinian divided the Roman Empire into an east and west division.[1] From that point on, the Empire of Imperialism was divided into an east-west balance of power. Since then, history continued to develop essentially in an east-west balance of power. It began in A.D. 364 with the Western Roman Empire headquartered in Rome and the Eastern Roman Empire in Constantinople. In the original division of the east-west axis, these two cities controlled the balance of power. Since then the centers of the balance of power have shifted, but it has remained an east-west division.

The eastern division of power remained in Constantinople until 1453, when it collapsed in the Turkish invasion. When Constantinople fell, the political rulers, scribes, and scholars fled northward into Russia and infiltrated the government there, setting up a Roman type of government (imperialism). The rulers called themselves *Czars*, which is Russian for "Caesar." After a while, Russia gave herself the official title of the Third Roman Empire. Eventually, the eastern balance of power was centered in the Soviet Union and included the Communist block of nations. With the collapse of European communism, the eastern balance shifted to Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). At the time of this writing, things are still shifting, with Islam becoming a major eastern power. However, the shifting is still going on and only time will determine how things will settle in the eastern balance of power.

The western division of power remained in Rome from 364 to 476, when Rome fell. From there it shifted to France, especially with the power gained by Charlemagne in A.D. 800. He called his domain the

[1] There was an earlier division in A.D. 285 that was short lived and the empire was reunited under Constantine in A.D. 312-313. The division in A.D. 364 was permanent.

Holy Roman Empire of the Frankish Nation. In 962, Otto I of Germany defeated the Franks and set up the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation. The leaders named themselves *Kaisers,* which is German for "Caesar." Since then, especially after World War I, the western balance of power has been centered in the democratic nations of the west.

So then, in 364 the Two Division Stage began and continues to the present day. The centers of the balance of power may shift again, but it will remain essentially an east-west balance until it gives way to the third stage.

c. The One World Government Stage

The next three stages of the Empire of Imperialism are all future. At some point the East-West Balance of Power will break down, leading to a one-world government. This stage is seen by Daniel seven, but not by Daniel two. Daniel 7:23 clearly states that at some point the Fourth Empire *devours the whole earth.* This is something that Rome never did. Some attempt to make this expression mean the "then-known world," but it cannot be said that Rome even conquered the then-known world. As soon as one empire conquers up to a certain point of territory, it is very obvious that there is more to follow beyond that. So it is foolish to say that Rome conquered the then-known world. Rome did not even extend as far east as the empire of Alexander the Great. The Greeks went as far as the Indus River in India, and Alexander would have gone further except for the refusal of his generals who wished to go no further. But even the area beyond the Indus River was part of the then-known world. Rome did not even extend that far. Furthermore, Rome never fully conquered the Parthian Empire, and that, too, was part of the known world. The area of Scotland was also part of the known world that Rome did not conquer. Rome had to build the Hadrian Wall in order to keep the nomads of northern Scotland from overrunning that part of Britain controlled by Rome. So by no means did Rome conquer the whole known world. Furthermore, other usages of the word in the Old Testament clearly teach universality (Gen. 8:9; 9:19; 11:1; Is. 6:3; 14:26; 28:22; 54:5; Jer. 15:10; Zech. 4:10, 14). Although in Daniel 2:39 the word is used of the Hellenistic Empire, it only states that such authority was given to it as it was to Babylon in Daniel 2:37-38, and neither of these two empires chose to exercise this authority. In

the case of the Fourth Empire, the wording states that it will *devour the whole earth*. The text demands that the Fourth Empire will at some time control the whole world and will devour it. So if literal interpretation is maintained, then the Fourth Empire of Imperialism is yet to control the whole world in the formation of a one-world government, which is something that has not yet been accomplished.

For this reason Rome must not be seen as the totality of the Fourth Empire, but only as the first stage of the Empire of Imperialism. The third stage, which will be the One World Government Stage, will happen at some point when the Two Division (east-west) Stage collapses. The timing of the third stage will be discussed further in Chapter 4, The Sequence of Pretribulational Events.

d. The Ten Division Stage

This stage was seen in both Daniel two in the ten toes and in Daniel seven in the ten horns. The Ten Division Stage is clearly stated to come out of the One World Government Stage. For some reason not given by the text, the One World Government will divide into ten kingdoms that will cover the whole world—not merely Europe. It has become common today to refer to the ten kingdoms as being in Europe only, especially the Former Common Market, now the European Union. But the text does not allow for this kind of interpretation. At the very best, the European Union might become one of the ten, but it could hardly become all of the ten. A careful reading of the Daniel passage states that once the Fourth Empire rules the whole world, then this One World Government will split into ten kingdoms. This requires the ten kingdoms to cover the entire world, not just the territory known as Europe. It would be a mistake to make too much of the European Union as being the Ten Division Stage. It would be far more consistent with the text to view it as possibly one of the ten, but not the entire ten. More consistent with Daniel's prophecy is the recommendation of the Club of Rome that the world be divided into ten administrative districts to avoid a world economic collapse.

The timing of this stage will also be discussed in Chapter 4, The Sequence of Pretribulational Events.

e. The Antichrist Stage

It is during the Ten Kingdom Stage that the Antichrist will begin his rise to power. Eventually, he will be strong enough to uproot three of the ten kings, and the other seven will simply submit to his authority. Once the other seven submit their authority to the Antichrist, this will begin the fifth and final stage of the Fourth Gentile Empire, the Antichrist Stage, which is the stage of Absolute Imperialism. In this sense he is *diverse* from the other ten.

The timing of this stage will be discussed in Chapter 11, The Events of the Middle of the Tribulation.

The combined chart seen earlier on the two chapters in Daniel can now be redone with the added information as follows:

1. The Babylonian Empire
2. The Medo-Persian Empire
3. The Hellenistic Empire
    a. The United Stage
    b. The Four Division Stage
4. The Fourth Empire—The Empire of Imperialism
    a. The United Stage—The Roman Empire
    b. The Two Division Stage—The East-West Balance of Power
    c. The One World Government Stage
    d. The Ten Division Stage—The Ten Kingdoms
    e. The Antichrist Stage—Absolute Imperialism
5. The Messianic Kingdom

With this information in hand, it is now necessary to consider the other two passages dealing with the Times of the Gentiles.

D. Revelation 13:1-10

The third passage is Revelation 13:1-10:

> *And I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns ten diadems, and upon his heads names of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his throne, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as though it*

> *had been smitten unto death; and his death-stroke was healed: and the whole earth wondered after the beast; and they worshipped the dragon, because he gave his authority unto the beast; and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? and who is able to war with him? and there was given to him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and there was given to him authority to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth for blasphemies against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, even them that dwell in the heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and there was given to him authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation. And all that dwell on the earth shall worship him, every one whose name hath not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb that has been slain. If any man has an ear, let him hear. If any man is for captivity, into captivity he goes: if any man shall kill with the sword, with the sword must he be killed. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.*

Most of this passage will be discussed at a more appropriate time. At this point it is only necessary to deal with it as it relates to the Times of the Gentiles. In verses 1-2 John describes the Beast that comes out of the sea. The *sea* in Revelation 13 is the same as the one in Daniel seven, which represents the Gentile world. Daniel two surveyed all the four empires. Daniel seven summarized the four empires, and then focused its attention on the Fourth Empire of Imperialism in its various stages. But Revelation 13 is completely focused on the Fourth Empire, emphasizing a particular stage of the Fourth Empire, namely, the fifth stage, the Antichrist Stage.

The Beast that John saw is the same beast that Daniel saw in chapter seven, where it was nondescript. But here the Beast is given a description. In verse one, the Beast has ten horns and seven heads. The ten horns are found in Daniel seven, and they represent the ten kingdoms, which is the fourth stage of the Empire of Imperialism. While the Ten Division Stage gives way to the fifth stage, the ten kingdoms continue to exist to the end. The difference between the two stages is that in the fourth stage the world is divided into ten kingdoms ruled co-equally by ten men, while in the fifth stage the

world in all ten divisions is ruled by the Antichrist, and the other kings are subject to him. A new element is introduced by Revelation 13: the Beast has seven heads. The meaning of these seven heads will be explained in the fourth major passage, to be discussed later in this chapter.

In verse two, the Beast has a leopard-like body, bear-like feet, and a lion-like mouth. This, then, is the interpretation and explanation of the verse found in Daniel 7:12:

> *And as for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time.*

The dominion of the first three empires was over, but their lives were prolonged. Their lives were prolonged in that the previous empires left their influence on the Fourth Empire. From the Daniel seven passage it is clear that the leopard-like body represents the Hellenistic influence; the bear-like feet represents the Medo-Persian influence; and the lion-like mouth represents the Babylonian influence. Thus, while their dominion ended, their lives were prolonged.

In verses 3-10, the text concentrates on the fifth stage of the Fourth Empire, the Antichrist Stage. The details will be discussed later in a more appropriate place, so a concise summary is all that will be needed here. In verse three, the death and resurrection of the Antichrist is viewed. One of the heads was smitten unto death and the death-stroke was healed. It is the seventh head that is smitten, and the full meaning of the head and heads will be discussed with the fourth major passage dealing with the Times of the Gentiles. In verse four, the worship of the Antichrist is described. In verses 5-7, the activities of the Antichrist are described, and they are similar to those recorded in Daniel seven: he speaks great things (v. 5a); he reigns with absolute control for 3½ years (v. 5b); he blasphemes against all Heaven (v. 6); he wars against the saints (v. 7a) and the nations (v. 7b). In verse eight, the worship of the Antichrist is described again. The passage concludes in verses 9-10 with a warning to those who do so.

This passage will be discussed in detail in the chapter dealing with the events of the middle of the Tribulation. What is seen in Revelation 13 is the Fourth Gentile Empire of Imperialism in its fifth and final

stage, the Antichrist Stage, and his activities in the second half of the Tribulation are described.

The ten horns represent the ten kingdoms of the fourth stage which precede the fifth stage of the Antichrist. But chapter 13 adds the fact that this beast has seven heads, which is not mentioned in any of the previous passages dealing with the Times of the Gentiles. The fourth and final passage will focus on the seven heads.

E. Revelation 17:7-14

The fourth passage which deals with the Times of the Gentiles is Revelation 17:7-14:

> *And the angel said unto me, Why did you wonder? I will tell you the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns. The beast that you saw was, and is not; and is about to come up out of the abyss, and to go into perdition. And they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, they whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast, how that he was, and is not, and shall come. Here is the mind that has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sits: and they are seven kings; the five are fallen, the one is, the other is not yet come; and when he comes, he must continue a little while. And the beast that was, and is not, is himself also an eighth, and is of the seven; and he goes into perdition. And the ten horns that you saw are ten kings, who have received no kingdom as yet; but they receive authority as kings, with the beast, for one hour. These have one mind, and they give their power and authority unto the beast. These shall war against the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them, for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings, and they also shall overcome that are with him, called and chosen and faithful.*

From verse seven it is clear that the Beast is the same as the one found in Revelation 13 and is the same as the fourth beast of Daniel seven. This beast has ten horns and seven heads. What the ten horns represent was explained earlier: the fourth stage of the Fourth Empire–the ten kingdoms. What is about to be explained is what the seven

heads represent. In verse eight, as in Revelation 13, the death and resurrection of the Antichrist is described with the subsequent worship of him. Details of this will be discussed in Chapter 11, The Events of the Middle of the Tribulation.

Then verses 9-10 explain the meaning of the seven heads. Verse nine states that *the seven heads are seven mountains*. Unfortunately, too many Bible teachers have stopped here, ignored the following verse, and consequently concluded that the seven mountains represent Rome, for Rome is a city sitting upon seven hills. However, a number of cities in the Middle East claim to sit upon seven hills or mountains. So this is not enough to pinpoint Rome as the place to which this passage refers. But the identification with Rome becomes totally unwarranted if the verse is seen in its complete context. The fact that the seven heads are said to be seven mountains shows that these mountains are to be taken symbolically. As mentioned previously, whenever the word *mountain* is used symbolically, it is always a symbol of a king, kingdom, or throne. This is the case here. In fact, the very next verse, verse ten, actually interprets the meaning of the seven mountains. Verse nine does not end the sentence, since the sentence continues into verse ten. Having stated that the seven heads are seven mountains in verse nine, he clearly states in verse ten that these seven mountains represent something other than real mountains: *and they are seven kings.* The meaning of *mountains* here is quite consistent with its symbolic usage everywhere else in the Scriptures. In verse nine, the seven heads are seven mountains, and in verse ten the pronoun *they* clearly indicates that these seven mountains are to be viewed as seven kings. It is not Rome the city that is meant, but seven kings. Verse ten further states that of these seven heads-mountains-kings, five were fallen by John's day, one was present at that time, and one more was yet to come. If this refers to Rome the city, then five hills should no longer be in existence, only one should be there now, with another to arise in the future! Contextually then, this is an impossible interpretation.

While both the ten horns and seven heads are representative of kings, there is a difference between them. The ten horns are kings that are *contemporary* with each other. They all rise and reign at the same time. But the seven heads are *chronological* or *sequential.* One follows the other in chronological sequence, and no two are ever contemporary. At the time of the writing of the Revelation, five had already gone into

history and were no more. The sixth head-mountain-king was present and in control, and there was one more to go.

With this information in hand, what these seven heads represent can be deduced from a study of history. As has already been said, the Fourth Empire is the Empire of Imperialism. This is what was present in John's day, and hence, imperialism represents the sixth head. It was also the time of the first stage of the Empire of Imperialism, the United Stage or the Roman Empire Stage. Looking at Roman history, it is known that Rome went through five types of governments before it developed into the first stage of the Empire of Imperialism. They are as follows:

The Tarquin Kings	753-510 B.C.	(The First Head)
The Counsulors	510-494 B.C.	(The Second Head)
The Plebians or Dictators	494-390 B.C.	(The Third Head)
The Republicans or Decimvers (Oligarchy of Ten)	390-59 B.C.	(The Fourth Head)
The Triumvirate	59-27 B.C.	(The Fifth Head)

These represent the five heads which are fallen and were a part of history by the time John wrote his book. Before the Fourth Gentile Empire of Imperialism developed, these five types of governments preceded it. The sixth head was the one that was then present, which began in the year 27 B.C. and will continue into the middle of the Tribulation period. So the sixth head includes the first four stages of the Fourth Gentile Empire of Imperialism.

There is one head still to come, that is, the seventh head, which is the Antichrist Stage and the stage of Absolute Imperialism. Once the seventh head is established, *he must continue for a little while,* namely 3½ years.

Thus, the seven heads represent a chronological development from the Tarquin Kings to Absolute Imperialism. Five heads are fallen, the sixth head of imperialism now exists, and one is yet to come, the Antichrist.[2]

After the reference to his death and resurrection, John describes in verse 11 the position of the Antichrist as being an *eighth*, but *of the seven*.

---

[2] An alternate view is that the five fallen heads represent five previous Empires: Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece. Rome is the sixth, with the Antichrist destined to be the seventh.

He is *of the seven* in that there are seven heads, and the Antichrist is the seventh head. The heads are chronological and sequential, coming one after the other, with the Antichrist being the last to appear in the final period of the history of the seven heads.

But he is also an *eighth*. In what way is he an eighth? This is seen in his relationship to the ten horns. The ten horns represent the ten kingdoms that come out of the One World Government. It is the fourth stage of the Fourth Gentile Empire of Imperialism. These ten kings are contemporary and rule together. But as was seen from Daniel seven, when the Antichrist begins to take control, he uproots three of the ten horns. He kills three of the ten kings, leaving seven for the remainder of the Tribulation period. The Antichrist is contemporary with these seven, making him an *eighth*. He is an eighth contemporary king ruling over the other seven kings who have submitted to his authority. Yet he is *of the seven*, for he is the seventh head of the chronological ruling governments. The term "seven" refers to the *heads*, while the term "eight" refers to the *horns*.

The word *beast* in the Book of Revelation, then, is a reference to the Empire of Imperialism in its final and fifth stage, the Antichrist Stage. Hence, it is proper to view the Beast both as the Fourth Gentile Empire in its final stage as well as personally of the Antichrist himself. In the Book of Revelation, the word will be used in both senses: sometimes it will be used to describe the Fourth Gentile Empire as a whole in its fifth final form, while at other times it will be used to describe the Antichrist personally.

In verses 12-13 the ten horns are discussed. In verse 12, the ten horns are stated to be ten kings and to exist in the future beyond John's time. In verse 13, they surrender their authority to the Antichrist. The details will be studied later. Finally, in verse 14 the Fourth Empire is destroyed by Messiah Himself.

F. Summary of the Four Chapters

To summarize the four chapters of Scripture dealing with the Times of the Gentiles, three points should be noted.

First, the entire period of the Times of the Gentiles is to be composed of four Gentile empires: Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Hellenistic, and Imperialistic. *Second,* the Fourth Empire, the Empire of Imperialism, developed from five previous forms of Roman governments: the Tarquin Kings (The

First Head), the Counsulors (The Second Head), the Plebians (The Third Head), the Republicans (The Fourth Head), and the Triumvirate (The Fifth Head). *Third,* the Fourth Gentile Empire of the Imperialism was to undergo five stages, the first four being the United Stage (Rome), the Two Division Stage (East-West Balance of Power), the One World Government Stage, and the Ten Kingdom Stage. These first four stages are all the Sixth Head. This will be followed by the fifth stage, the Antichrist Stage, the stage of Absolute Imperialism, which is also the Seventh Head.

The details will be discussed more fully in Chapter 4, The Sequence of Pretribulational Events, and Chapter 11, The Events of the Middle of the Tribulation.

The understanding of the course of the Times of the Gentiles is invaluable to the understanding of the course of eschatology itself.

Combining all these chapters into outline form, it can be charted as follows:

1. The Babylonian Empire
2. The Medo-Persian Empire
3. The Hellenistic Empire
    a. The United Stage
    b. The Four Division Stage

(Developmental Prelude to the Fourth Gentile Empire)

    a. The Tarquin Kings—The First Head
    b. The Counsulors—The Second Head
    c. The Plebians—The Third Head
    d. The Republicans—The Fourth Head
    e. The Triumvirate—The Fifth Head

4. The Fourth Gentile Empire—Imperialism

The Sixth Head

    a. The United Stage—The Roman Empire
    b. The Two Division Stage—The East-West Balance of Power
    c. The One World Government Stage
    d. The Ten Kingdom Stage—The Ten Horns (Ten Kings)
    e. The Antichrist Stage—The Seventh Head (The Eleventh Horn and then the Eighth Horn)

5. The Messianic Kingdom

Part II

The Course of this Age

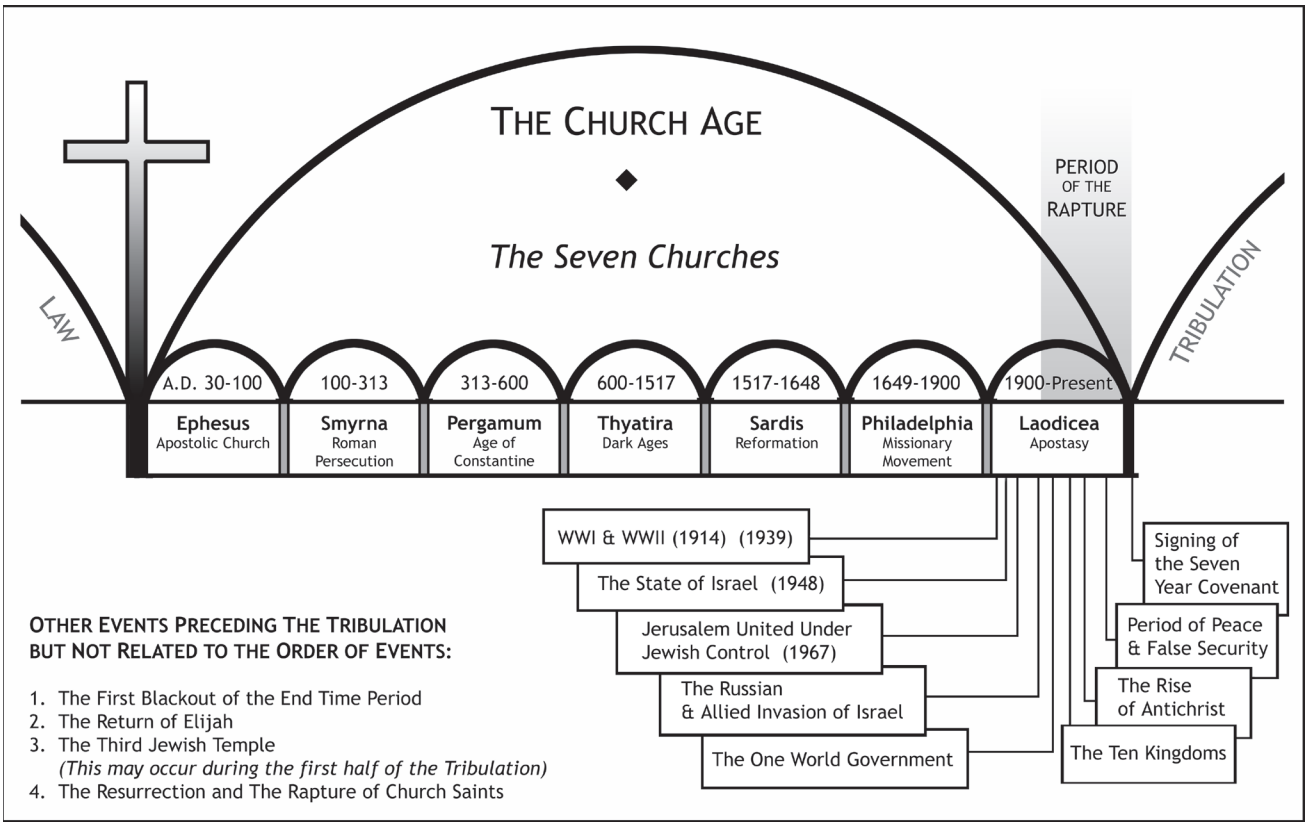

THE CHURCH AGE
The Seven Churches
LAW
PERIOD OF THE RAPTURE
TRIBULATION
A.D. 30-100
100-313
313-600
600-1517
1517-1648
1649-1900
1900-Present
Ephesus
Apostolic Church
Smyrna
Roman Persecution
Pergamum
Age of Constantine
Thyatira
Dark Ages
Sardis
Reformation
Philadelphia
Missionary Movement
Laodicea
Apostasy
WWI & WWII (1914) (1939)
The State of Israel (1948)
Jerusalem United Under Jewish Control (1967)
The Russian & Allied Invasion of Israel
The One World Government
Signing of the Seven Year Covenant
Period of Peace & False Security
The Rise of Antichrist
The Ten Kingdoms
OTHER EVENTS PRECEDING THE TRIBULATION BUT NOT RELATED TO THE ORDER OF EVENTS:
1. The First Blackout of the End Time Period
2. The Return of Elijah
3. The Third Jewish Temple
(This may occur during the first half of the Tribulation)
4. The Resurrection and The Rapture of Church Saints

Chart #3

THREE

The Eschatology of the Visible Church: the Things Which Are–the Seven Churches

Revelation chapters two and three comprise the second major division of the book. This division is *the things which are*: the seven churches. It is a description of the Church Age contained in seven short letters to the seven churches.

A. Characteristics

There are several characteristics found in these seven churches that should be noted. First, these are all messages of Jesus to the churches, and they are His last audible statements given in the Scriptures. Previous to this, the last audible statements were to Paul on the Damascus Road and some other subsequent appearances.

Second, they involve the visible church rather than the invisible Church. The latter is the Body of the Messiah, composed of all true believers since Pentecost. It is sometimes referred to as the Universal Church. But the visible church is the local body or local church, which may have both believers and unbelievers. It includes all professing believers whether they really are or not. While the invisible Church has only believers, the visible church can have both. As it shall be seen, the seven churches contain some of both.

A third characteristic is that Jesus has something against five of these churches and nothing against two. Furthermore, He finds something good in six of these churches but nothing good in the seventh church; the seventh church is entirely outside of His favor.

A fourth characteristic is that there are four common things in all seven letters. The first thing in common is that every letter has a description of the Messiah taken from the description of the Glorified Son of Man found in chapter one. Then each description is somehow related

to what follows in that particular letter. Chapter one gives a complete description of the Glorified Son of Man. Each one of these letters then takes a part of that description and relates it to the content of the individual letter.

The second thing in common is that all seven letters contain the words: *I know*. Five times it is, *I know your works*; once, *I know your tribulation*; and once, *I know where you dwell*. The point being made is that Jesus is intimately aware of the state of every local church.

The third statement common to all seven letters is: *he that overcomes*, followed by a promise which is somehow related to the particular nature of that church.

The fourth and final common statement in all seven letters is the statement: *he that has an ear let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches*. It is an admonition to obedience. The churches are responsible to conform to the demands of the letters.

B. Interpretation

The key question is how these letters are to be interpreted. For one thing, there are statements made in these letters that can be true only of the individual church. On the other hand, there are statements that can hardly be limited to that particular church and that particular local situation and sometimes cannot be true of it at all. These facts have led to a variety of views as to how they are to be interpreted. There are two areas of common agreement. The third area is the point of disagreement. The two areas of agreement are as follows.

First: these seven churches were seven real churches to whom John was writing. They were seven literal churches existing in John's day. They were also seven different types of churches that existed at that time.

Second: all seven church types exist throughout the Church Age. No matter what part of church history one may turn to, he will find all seven types of churches. All seven types will continue to exist until the Rapture.

While there is general consensus on the first two points among premillennial writers, this is not true with the third issue, known as the historical-prophetic interpretation, which states that while all seven types of churches always exist, one type dominates a particular era of

church history. Throughout church history all seven types of churches will be present, but one type will tend to dominate a particular period of church history. Thus, these letters present a prophetic picture of the seven historical periods in which the visible church will develop. These letters are being written to *the seven* churches, representative of the whole. These seven were chosen, *first*, because of the particular meaning of their names, and *second*, because the situation of that particular local church will also be characteristic of a future period of church history. Certain statements made to individual churches cannot be true of the strictly local situation, and they must have a far wider meaning.

The question this third perspective raises is: Does this view not violate *The Golden Rule of Interpretation* and the principle of a literal hermeneutic? If it could be clearly shown that all that was said in a particular letter can be or was true of that particular church or that type of church, then the answer would be: "Yes." But if statements are made that cannot in any way be true of that particular church or only of that church, or only of that type of church, then the answer would be: "No." This author would prefer to limit the interpretation to that church only or to that type of church only, but now and then statements are made which render that impossible. One example is the promise to keep the Church of Philadelphia from *the hour of trial, that hour which is to come upon the whole earth*. The time is long past that this promise could be kept only to that particular church, for that local church no longer exists; nor can this promise be limited to that type of church because other types of churches of these two chapters will also share in the promise. Hence, the historical-prophetic interpretation does have strong merit, though it is not without its problems. While this author is not totally comfortable with this third point, he is still more so with it than without it. Furthermore, it is the literal interpretation of such promises that has moved this author to that position.

However, this view is not germane to the main issue: that the seven churches of Revelation two and three cover the period of *the things which are*, the Church Age. Even if the third point is abandoned, it will not affect the basic development of this book, which is concerned with the sequence of prophetic events. As each of these letters will be studied, all three points will be presented. One can proceed to drop those parts applied to a specific point of church history, but the other two points will still remain intact. Thus one can conclude that these seven letters do

not actually survey seven periods of church history, but all seven types are here, and at the Rapture, the believing Church is removed while the unbelieving stay behind.

C. Basic Outline

The seven letters all follow a basic outline containing six items:

Destination
Description of Jesus
Commendation
Condemnation
Exhortation
Promise

Not all seven letters have all six points of the outline, nor are they necessarily in that order. But this is the basic structure of each letter.

D. The Seven Letters

1. Ephesus: The Apostolic Church (A.D. 30-100)—Revelation 2:1-7

To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: These things says he that holds the seven stars in his right hand, he that walks in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks: I know your works, and your toil and patience, and that you can not bear evil men; and did try them that call themselves apostles, and they are not, and did find them false; and you have patience and did bear for my name's sake, and have not grown weary. But I have this against you, that you did leave your first love. Remember therefore whence you are fallen, and repent and do the first works; or else I come to you, and will move your candlestick out of its place, except you repent. But this you have, that you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. He that has an ear, let

> *him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him that overcomes, to him will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.*

The *destination* (v. 1a) of the letter is Ephesus, which means "desired." It represents the period of the Apostolic Church which began in A.D. 30 and continued to about A.D. 100, the time of the death of the last Apostle, John, the author of the Book of Revelation. Ephesus was the type of church that typified the Apostolic Church.

This is followed by a *description of Jesus* (v. 1b) taken from Revelation 1:13, 16, and 20. It points to the control He has over the destiny of the churches.

The *commendation* is found in verses 2-3 and 6. *First*, they are commended for condemning false teachers (vv. 2-3). In Acts 20:29-31, Paul warned the elders at Ephesus that false teachers would come and despoil the church. By the time Paul wrote the books of I and II Timothy, the false teachers had arrived and were causing corruption in the church (I Tim.1:3-4, 18-20; 6:3-10, 20-21; II Tim. 2:14-18; 4:1-4). These false teachers created havoc, and Timothy was somewhat discouraged when Paul gave him some advice as to how to handle the situation. By the time this first letter is written, the Church at Ephesus had overcome the problem and resisted the false teachers, and they are commended for it. *Second*, they are commended for hating the work of the Nicolaitans (v. 6). In church history there is no record or mention of this group, so clues as to its identity need to be sought elsewhere. The meaning of the word in Greek is "rulers of the people." This meaning may imply that this was an attempt to divide and make an unnatural distinction between the clergy and the laity, creating a division in which the clergy exercised rulership over the laity. Certainly, elders have the biblical authority to determine the policy of that local church. But the authority described here probably went much further than the issues in the local church and may have extended to the personal lives of the members. The Ephesians hated this kind of thing and are commended for it.

The *condemnation* is found in verse four. They have lost their first love, referring to love of the Messiah and love of the Word. The second generation of believers has grown lax and has become cold. They did not have the fervor of the first generation; hence, there is condemnation. A similar problem is seen in the recipients of the letter to the Hebrews: a group of second generation Jewish believers who, due to persecution,

had grown lax and, hence, had lost their first love.

The *exhortation* is found in verse five. They are urged to remember their first love, repent, and return to it. Failure will result in the removal of their candlestick, the removal of their witness.

The *promise* is found in verse seven. While the letters are addressed to the churches as a whole, the promises are all to individuals in the church who overcome the problem of the church as a whole. To the one who does overcome and returns to his first love, there is promised the privilege of eating of the fruit of the Tree of Life in the Eternal Order. Eating with someone implies fellowship, so the one who overcomes will fellowship with Him. Since this also involves the Tree of Life, this is a promise of a share in the Eternal Order. Further comment will be reserved until the last chapter of Revelation, where these symbols are found again.

This is the letter to the Church of Ephesus and it is relevant to that particular church. Certain things true of this local church were also true of the apostolic church in the second generation stage. In the historical-prophetic interpretation, this is the type of church that dominated the first period of church history.

2. Smyrna: The Church of the Roman Persecution (A.D. 100-313)—Revelation 2:8-11

> *And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: These things says the first and last, who was dead, and lived again: I know your tribulation, and your poverty (but you are rich), and the blasphemy of them that say they are Jews, and they are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. Fear not the things which you are about to suffer: behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days. Be you faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life. He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He that overcomes shall not be hurt of the second death.*

The *destination* is in verse 8a, and it is to the church in the city of

Smyrna. Smyrna means "myrrh," which is associated with death and embalming (Jn. 19:39-40). Thus, in the historical-prophetic interpretation, this church becomes the fitting symbol to represent the second period of church history, that of the Roman persecution from about A.D. 100 to 313.

The *description of Jesus* is in verse 8b, and it is taken from Revelation 1:17-18. He tells the church that He is the First and the Last, and that He Himself died and lived again. Although He died violently, He nevertheless did live again because of the resurrection. Since many of these people will also die violent deaths, this description is given as one of comfort for them, for they, too, will live again by way of resurrection.

The *commendation* is found in verse nine. *First*, they are commended for having patience in sufferings. They are good examples of what the writer of the Book of Hebrews tells its recipients that they need: patient endurance. They have suffered fiercely, but they endured it patiently. *Second*, they are commended for enduring the blasphemy of those who claim to be Jews, but they are not and are of the synagogue of Satan. In the local situation this may refer to a particular incident for which we lack historical confirmation. In church history this may refer to the Romans, who considered themselves to be the people of God with the emperor being a god himself. The believers were thus being persecuted by those claiming to be the people of God, but were not. Believers were often killed on the very grounds that they refused to sacrifice to the emperor.

Smyrna is one of the two churches that Jesus had nothing against, and so there is no *condemnation*.

The *exhortation* is in verse ten, and concerns three things. *First*, they are urged not to fear the things that they are about to suffer. *Second*, he warns them that they are about to suffer persecution for a period of ten days. In all probability, this refers to ten literal days of persecution in the local situation, and there was a ten-day period in which many suffered and died. For this, too, we simply lack the historical confirmation, for we do not have a complete record of church history in this early period of time or of that particular church. From the viewpoint of the historical-prophetic interpretation, some have noted that between the years A.D. 96-313, while there were more than ten Roman emperors, only ten of them actually and officially persecuted the church: Domitian

(96), Trajan (98-117), Hadrian (117-138), Antonius Pius (138-161), Marcus Aurelius (161-180), Septimus Severus (193-211), Maximin (235-238), Decius (249-251), Valarian (251-260), and Diocletian (284-305). These ten Roman emperors might be represented in the ten days of persecution. However, in the Book of Revelation, time zones, be they days, months, or years, are always quite literal, and it is best to take these ten days as being the same. Therefore, they refer to a literal ten-day period of persecution suffered by the Church of Smyrna. Even if one accepts the historical-prophetic interpretation scheme, it is best to limit this to those parts that cannot be true of that local church or only that local church. So this church may represent the second period of church history, but the ten days should remain only ten days and not ten periods of time. *Third*, they are exhorted not to fear death, for if they die as martyrs, then they shall secure the *crown of life*.

The *promise* is found in verse 11. Although they may die violently once, they will not die the second time, which is the second death. The nature of the second death will be discussed in detail at a more appropriate time in the course of this study. But the killers who are persecuting them will die the first time and will die a second time as well.

3. Pergamum: The Church of the Age of Constantine (A.D. 313-600)—Revelation 2:12-17

> *And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: These things says he that has the sharp two-edged sword: I know where you dwell, even where Satan's throne is; and you hold fast my name, and did not deny my faith, even in the days of Antipas my witness, my faithful one, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells. But I have a few things against you, because you have there some that hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit fornication. So have you also some that hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans in like manner. Repent therefore; or else I come to you quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of my*

> *mouth. He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him that overcomes, to him will I give of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and upon the stone a new name written, which no one knows but he that receives it.*

The *destination* of the letter is in verse 12a, and is said to be to Pergamum, which means "thoroughly married." It was a major city of idolatry with many temples, one of which was the temple of Esculapius, containing an idol in the form of a serpent. This may be what *Satan's throne* refers to. In the historical-prophetic view, it is the church of the age of Constantine that saw the church married to the state. In 313, Emperor Constantine made Christianity the official state religion of the Roman Empire, and thus the church was married to the state.

The *description of Jesus* in verse 12b is taken from Revelation 1:16. This description is one of judgment, especially of that exercised by the Word of God.

The *commendation* is in verse 13. They are commended for not denying the faith, singling out one of their faithful members, Antipas, who suffered martyrdom for his witness. Nothing more is known of Antipas, yet this gives us a small hint of what occurred in the local Church at Pergamum. His name means "against all" and may indicate that he stood against all satanic worship. The war against their faith was being inspired by satanic opposition. The Pergamum Church is said to be dwelling where Satan himself dwells, where Esculapius, the serpent-son, was worshiped.

The *condemnation* is found in verses 14-15. They are condemned for two things. *First*, in verse 14, they are condemned for allowing some to hold the teachings of Balaam. Balaam, in Numbers 22-24, was a seer of Mesopotamia. He was hired by Balak, the king of Moab, in league with the Midianites, to pronounce a prophetic curse on Israel. Although on four different occasions he tried to curse the Jews, God took control of the seer so that on all four occasions he pronounced a blessing on the Jews instead. With the failure of pronouncing a prophetic curse on Israel, Balaam used a different tactic to have Israel cursed by God. At his recommendation, the females of Moab and Midian were sent out to entice the Jewish men sexually. Part of the enticement included the worship of the gods of Moab and Midian. The plot worked, Israel was cursed, and many died in a plague. However, this scheme later caused the destruc-

tion of the Midianites and the death of Balaam himself (Num. 25:1-16; 31:1-20; Deut. 23:3-6). The teaching of Balaam was encouragement of corruption by intermarriage resulting in fornication and idolatry. No doubt in the city of Pergamum intermarriage with the pagan world was a real problem. Because civil and religious life were so intertwined, for believers to accept social engagements probably meant some involvement with paganism. Apparently many believers compromised anyway. In the age of Constantine, the church became married to the state which, eventually resulted in spiritual fornication and idolatry. Now that the church was made a state religion, people all over the Roman Empire were baptized into the church without any regard to personal faith. By simply being baptized, they were able to join the new establishment. As a result, a massive amount of pagans entered the church bringing many of their pagan practices with them. Idolatry entered the church as these people added Jesus to the many other gods that they already had. This led to spiritual fornication and idolatry. It planted the seeds for what later developed into the Roman Catholic Church. Thus, they were rightly condemned for holding to the teachings of Balaam. *Second*, in verse 15, they are condemned for permitting the teachings of the Nicolaitans. The very group that Ephesus was commended for not tolerating, Pergamum was condemned for tolerating. It was during this period of church history that a distinction began to emerge between the clergy and the laity with different sets of laws and regulations for each group. A priestly order was set up in the church that further corrupted and laid the foundation for what was to follow in the next phase of the Church Age.

The *exhortation* is found in verse 16. They are exhorted to repent (change their minds) and to clean up the church or it will be judged.

The *promise* is in verse 17, and it is threefold. *First*, the one who overcomes is promised *hidden manna*. Manna in the Old Testament was the food provided for the children of Israel when they departed from the land of Egypt. The person leaving the state church might be deprived of his job and welfare. But in spite of what he may be deprived of, God will provide his sustenance. *Second*, they are promised a *white stone*. In the ancient world there were two ways that one received a white stone. One way was when a person was found innocent in a trial; he was given a white stone as a symbol of acquittal. Another way was when a person was to be received into the membership of a private club; he would be given a white stone, which was a symbol of his acceptance. Both elements

might be included in this second promise. He will be acquitted of the guilt of that particular church, and it will be a mark of his acceptance by God. *Third*, the promise is that he will be given a *new name written* on the stone which only he will know. Often in Scripture a new name was given to a person after he had overcome certain spiritual problems. One example is that of Jacob who was given the name Israel (Gen. 32:22-32). Another is Abram, whose name was changed to Abraham (Gen. 17:1-8).

4. Thyatira: The Church of the Dark Ages (A.D. 600-1517)—Revelation 2:18-29

And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: These things says the Son of God, who has his eyes like a flame of fire, and his feet are like unto burnished brass: I know your works, and your love and faith and ministry and patience, and that your last works are more than the first. But I have this against you, that you suffer the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess; and she teaches and seduces my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols. And I gave her time that she should repent; and she wills not to repent of her fornication. Behold, I cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of her works. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he that searches the reins and hearts: and I will give unto each one of you according to your works. But to you I say, to the rest that are in Thyatira, as many as have not this teaching, who know not the deep things of Satan, as they are wont to say; I cast upon you none other burden. Nevertheless that which ye have, hold fast till I come. And he that overcomes, and he that keeps my works unto the end, to him will I give authority over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to shivers; as I also

> *have received of my Father: and I will give him the morning star. He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.*

The *destination* in verse 18a is the Church of Thyatira, which means "continual or perpetual sacrifice." In the historical-prophetic interpretation, it becomes a fitting description of the Church of the Dark Ages as embodied in the Roman Catholic doctrine of the continual sacrifice in the Mass. In Roman Catholic theology, when the priest consecrates the wafer and the cup, they are said to become the real body and the real blood of Jesus (Transubstantiation), and so He is re-sacrificed. The laity were given only the wafer and were refused the cup because of the belief that the real blood might be accidentally spilled. The cup was for the clergy alone. Thus, the distinction between the clergy and the laity begun by the Nicolaitans had been brought to fruition.

The *description of Jesus* is found in verse 18b, and is taken from Revelation 1:14-15. They are symbols of judgment. It is He Who is the Son of God, and He alone is to be worshiped. There is to be no addition whatsoever.

The *commendation* is in verse 19. They are commended for their works of love, faith, ministry, and patience, and that these works were increasing. They were characterized by good works and so their external appearance was positive.

This is followed by a lengthy *condemnation* in verses 20-23. In verses 20-21, the condemnation involves the toleration of a woman named Jezebel. Conceivably there may have been a woman by that name in the local Church at Thyatira, but this is highly unlikely. The name Jezebel is a Phoenecian name, and by this time the Phoenecians had disappeared as a separate ethnic identity and had become part of the Greek-speaking world. Furthermore, Thyatira was not located in Phoenecia, but in Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey). It is statements like this that lend credence to the historical-prophetic interpretation. Furthermore, when a woman is used symbolically in Scripture, she represents a religious entity. This might be either positive or negative. On the positive side, there is Israel as the Wife of Jehovah and the Church as the Bride of the Messiah. On the negative side, there is the woman with the leaven (Mat. 13:33), the Great Harlot of chapter 17, and here, the woman Jezebel. This is most likely a reference to the Old Testament Jezebel to describe the state of the Church in Thyatira, just

as Balaam was used to describe the state of the Church in Pergamum. Jezebel was a Sidonian princess who became the wife of Ahab, the king of Israel (I Kg. 16:29-33). She was responsible for introducing a pagan religion into Israel that surpassed all the previous sins of idolatry in the Northern Kingdom. Idolatry in the Northern Kingdom began with Jeroboam I, the first king. But there was a difference between the sin of Jeroboam and the sin of Baal worship introduced by Jezebel. The sin of Jeroboam was a corruption of the true religion. Jeroboam set up a golden calf in Dan and Bethel, but these golden calves represented the God that brought them out of the land of Egypt. This was idolatry, but it was a corruption of the true Jehovah worship (I Kg. 12:25-33). Furthermore, Jeroboam could cite a precedent in the worship of the golden calf built by Aaron. His words concerning the golden calf in I Kings 12:28 are a quotation of Aaron's words in Exodus 32:4. With Jezebel, it was not merely a corruption of the true religion; a whole new god and system of worship were introduced in Israel (I Kg. 16:29-33). Through Jezebel, Baal worship came into the Land, resulting in more idolatry than ever before. Involved in the worship of Baal was sexual immorality. In the corruption of Jehovah worship morality was still present, but in the worship of Baal there was total immorality. Jezebel thus became a very real picture of what the Roman Catholic Church evolved into during the period of the Dark Ages. It introduced a paganism that resulted in idolatry and spiritual fornication, and it became a new religious system bearing little resemblance to the New Testament church. It was during this period that ten false doctrines were introduced into the church:

1. Justification by works—Not simply by grace through faith;
2. Baptismal regeneration—That a person is saved by baptism;
3. Worship of images;
4. Celibacy—Forbidding priests to marry, a further distinction between clergy and laity;
5. Confessionalism—Where sins are confessed to a priest who then declares absolution of those sins;
6. Purgatory—A place of confinement which is neither Heaven nor Hell, but a place where one has to be refined before going into Heaven, and so sanctification was not complete at death;

7. Transubstantiation—The concept of the continual and perpetual sacrifice of Jesus;
8. Indulgences—Where through the giving of money, a person's time in purgatory could be reduced;
9. Penance—Involving the torment of one's body in order to reduce time in purgatory; and
10. Mariolatry—The worship of the virgin Mary, her elevation as the mother of God, and the declaration of her deity.

All this led to idolatry and spiritual fornication. Jezebel in Thyatira is the Roman Catholic Church within Christendom of the Dark Ages.

In verses 22-23, there is a description of the judgment of Jezebel. In verse 22, the woman is to be cast into the Great Tribulation. This means that unlike the true Church, the Roman Catholic Church will go into the Great Tribulation and will play a role during that time. The nature of that role and the nature of the judgment will be discussed in Chapter 10. For now, it is enough to note that as part of her judgment, the Roman Catholic Church will be cast into the Tribulation period. This is another example of a passage that simply cannot be limited to the local situation. If there really was a specific woman named Jezebel in Thyatira, she would by now be long dead and, therefore, would not be cast into the Great Tribulation. Yet the prophecy is very specific: she and her children will be cast into it. Only if Jezebel is representative of a system can this be true. And again, when a woman is used symbolically, it symbolizes a religious system or entity. In verse 23, the children of Jezebel, that is, the adherents of the Roman Catholic Church, will suffer physical violence and death as part of God's judgment on Jezebel.

The *exhortation* is found in verses 24-25. The exhortation involves those who are not part of the Jezebel system and do not know *the deep things of Satan*. The Roman Catholic Church must be viewed as Satan's counterfeit. In the exhortation to those who are not involved in Satan's counterfeit, they are told to hold fast to that which is pure. They are told to hold fast to the New Testament truth as over against the Roman Catholic Church system. While this may not sound like a major obligation, in the context of the Dark Ages, it took tremendous spiritual courage and energy.

Finally, in verses 26-29, there is the *promise* which is twofold. *First*, the one overcoming will have a part in the Messianic Kingdom. In contrast

to the false authority of the Roman Catholic Church, they will have true authority over the nations during the Messianic Kingdom. *Second*, they will have the Morning Star. Here another figure is being used in the Book of Revelation, but no speculation is needed. In Revelation 22:16, Jesus Himself is declared to be the Morning Star. Thus, they will possess Jesus. The possession of the true faith presupposes a possession of the Person of the Messiah.

5. Sardis: The Church of the Reformation (A.D. 1517-1648) —Revelation 3:1-6

> *And to the angel of the church in Sardis write: These things says he that has the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars: I know your works, that you have a name that you live, and you are dead. Be you watchful, and establish the things that remain, which were ready to die: for I have found no works of yours perfected before my God. Remember therefore how you have received and did hear; and keep it, and repent. If therefore you shall not watch, I will come as a thief, and you shall not know what hour I will come upon you. But you have a few names in Sardis that did not defile their garments: and they shall walk with me in white; for they are worthy. He that overcomes shall thus be arrayed in white garments; and I will in no wise blot his name out of the book of life, and I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels. He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.*

The *destination* of the fifth letter in verse 1a is Sardis, which means "those escaping." In the historical-prophetic interpretation, it represents the Church of the Reformation, which began in 1517 with Martin Luther's posting of his Ninety-Five Theses and ended in 1648 with the signing of the Peace of Westphalia. It could also be approximated as ending about 1700.

In verse 1b, there is the *description of Jesus* taken from Revelation 1:4, 16, and 20. It is a reference to the seven Spirits of God as over against a church without spirit.

Then, in verse 1c, is the *condemnation*. They have a name that lives,

but actually they are dead. This is a valid description of the church of the Reformation as it developed in its later stages. They had a name that lived: the Reformation resulted in much doctrinal correction and good creeds. Much of the wrong done and the doctrines promulgated by the Roman Catholic Church were corrected by the Reformation. The different churches developing in the Reformation had good creeds and solid biblical doctrine. Nevertheless, they were dead; there was no spiritual vitality. They became dead because they failed to rectify the basic problem which was the unity of church and state. After they broke away from the Roman Catholic Church, they too became state churches. In Germany and Scandinavia, the Lutheran Church became the state church; in England, it was the Anglican Church or Church of England; in Scotland, the Presbyterian Church; in one part of Switzerland, the Calvinists or Reformed Church; in another part of Switzerland, the Zwinglian Church. The Reformation failed to correct the problem of church and state unity. Therefore, it eventually became a dead church. What corrupted Pergamum also corrupted Sardis. Because of the existence of state churches, children who were born in a given locality were simply baptized and by this means became members of the church. Personal faith had little or nothing to do with becoming a member of the church. In a matter of time, the greater part of the church was composed of unregenerate members. The churches all had good, solid creeds (except that they were still bound to Replacement Theology), and so it appeared that they were living churches. But they were dead. There was no spiritual life because of the lack of personal faith, and a great part of each church was composed of unbelievers. Even to this day there are state churches in Europe which have good doctrinal creeds, and they are composed of people who are spiritually dead.

The *exhortation* is found in verses 2-3. In verse two, they are exhorted to resurrect that which is about to die, that is, to go back to spiritual life as well as good doctrinal creeds. Spiritual life is impossible without good doctrine. But good doctrine without spiritual life is dead. Both are, therefore, necessary. In verse three, the point is made that deadness will result in Jesus' coming unexpectedly. A church with spiritual life will not be surprised when Jesus returns for the Church. But a dead church will be caught unaware because they will not be expecting Him. And as unbelievers, they shall be left behind.

In verse four, there is the *commendation* to "those escaping." Their garments are undefiled and white. Hence, these are the ones who have exercised faith, who do have spiritual life, and who have overcome the deadness of the church.

The *promise* in verses 5-6 is threefold. *First*, they will have white garments. The symbol used here is explained in a different part of the Revelation. Revelation 7:14 states . . . *and they washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb*. Thus, the white garments are a symbol of salvation. The *first* promise to those escaping is salvation, because for them the good doctrine is not dead, but alive in Jesus. A *second* promise is that their names will not be blotted out of the Book of Life. The Book of Life will be discussed at a more appropriate place. But this promise also involves their salvation, which will be eternally secure, because their names will not be blotted out. It is a promise of eternal security. Then, *third*, the name of the believer will be confessed by Jesus before the angels.

6. Philadelphia: The Church of the Great Missionary Movement (A.D. 1648-1900)—Revelation 3:7-13

And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: These things says he that is holy, he that is true, he that has the key of David, he that opens and none shall shut, and that shuts and none opens: I know your works (behold, I have set before you a door opened, which none can shut), that you have a little power, and did keep my word, and did not deny my name. Behold, I give of the synagogue of Satan, of them that say they are Jews, and they are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you. Because you did keep the word of my patience, I also will keep you from the hour of trial, that hour which is to come upon the whole world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. I come quickly: hold fast that which you have, that no one take your crown. He that overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go out thence no more: and I will write upon him the name of God,

> *and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from my God, and my own new name. He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.*

The *destination* (v. 7a) is the church in the city of Philadelphia, which means "brotherly love." In the historical-prophetic interpretation, it is a fitting symbol of the church during the great missionary movement from 1700 through 1900. It was a period of great missionary names like Hudson Taylor, Adoraim Judson, William Carey, and others.

The *description of Jesus* in verse 7b is taken from Revelation 1:18, picturing Him as the One with authority to open and close doors.

This is the second church for which there is no *condemnation*. Like Smyrna, Jesus finds nothing against this church and is satisfied with it.

The *commendation* is found in verse eight. They are commended for making use of the open door. It is Jesus Himself Who opened the door, and the Philadelphians were faithful in making use of the open door. During the period of 1700-1900 there was virtually no place where a missionary could not go. Every place was open to them. Today, more and more countries are closing their doors to missionaries. But during those two centuries there were virtually no limitations, and this church took advantage of it. They had little power; it was a minority supporting these missionaries. Yet, the little power was used to accomplish great things. They are commended for it.

The *promise* found in verses 9-10 and 12-13 is fourfold. *First*, in verse nine, they are promised fruit from those who claim to be Jews or the people of God and are not. It is still the period described by Hosea (1:8-9; 2:23) when Israel is on the sideline of God's program and considered to be *not my people.* But in the future they will again become *my people* (Hos. 1:10-2:1; 3:5). It is interesting to note that it is during this time that Jewish missions came into its own, and by 1900 some 250,000 Jews became believers. Jewish missions first began in Germany, took root in England, and finally came to fruition in the United States. It was a time when many of the natural branches were regrafted into their own Olive Tree. However, it is more likely that this verse deals more literally with those who claim to be Jews, but they are not. This is also the period that saw the rise of cults, such as Mormonism, Jehovah's Witnesses, Christian Science, and others. One common element among cults is to claim to be the "real" Jews by declaring themselves to be the 144,000 Jews or the

ten lost Tribes of Israel. Nevertheless, the Philadelphia Church will win converts among these as well. The *second* promise is in verse 10: they will not go into the Great Tribulation period. This verse will be discussed in more detail in the chapter dealing with the Rapture (Chapter 6), but for now, suffice it to say that this church is promised deliverance from the Great Tribulation period. The Jezebel element in the Thyatira Church will go through the Tribulation, but the Church of Philadelphia will not. This is not a promise that can be limited to Philadelphia, or at all, since this church has long passed away. This fact also supports the historical-prophetic interpretation. The *third* promise, in verse 12a, is that they will serve as a pillar in the Temple of God. On one hand, this may be a reference to being a part in the Temple of God as is seen in the invisible Church. On the other hand, it may also refer to the Millennial Temple; the promise then would be that they will have a share in the Millennial Temple during the Messianic Age. The *fourth* promise (v. 12b) is that they will have on them three new names: the name of God, the name of Jerusalem, and the new name of Jesus.

The *exhortation* is in verse 11. It is for them to continue to do as they are doing, for they are doing well.

7. Laodicea: The Church of the Apostasy (A.D. 1900-present day)—Revelation 3:14-22

> *And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: These things says the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God: I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot: I would you were cold or hot. So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spew you out of my mouth. Because you say, I am rich, and have gotten riches, and have need of nothing; and know not that you are the wretched one and miserable and poor and blind and naked: I counsel you to buy of me gold refined by fire, that you may become rich; and white garments, that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness be not made manifest; and eyesalve to anoint your eyes, that you may see. As many as I love, I reprove and chasten: be*

> *zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. He that overcomes, I will give to him to sit down with me in my throne, as I also overcame, and sat down with my Father in his throne. He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.*

The *destination* of the letter, in verse 14a, is Laodicea, which means "people ruling." This is set in contrast to God's ruling in the church. It is a church entirely ruled by men, for the Holy Spirit is not present and doing His ministry of guiding. In the historical-prophetic interpretation, this becomes an avid description of the Church of the Apostasy which began in the early 1900s and continues to the present day.

The *description of Jesus* is in verse 14b, and is taken from Revelation 1:4, 6, and 7. He is described as the faithful and true witness, whereas this church is neither faithful nor true to the Word.

All six of the previous churches had at least one word of *commendation*, but this church has none. There is nothing commendable in this church, as it is entirely an unsaved church.

Hence, the text continues to the *condemnation*, in verses 15-17. In verses 15-16, they are characterized by lukewarmness. The distinctions between hot, cold, and lukewarm can be determined by the overall context. The *hot* are the truly saved believers. The *cold* are those who are not believers and do not claim to be believers. The *lukewarm* are those who do claim to believe in Jesus, but are not truly regenerate believers. In verse 17, they are characterized by richness in worldly goods, but also self-deception, for they are spiritually poor, blind, and naked. This is a very good description of the Apostate Church. For all these traits, they are condemned.

Apostasy can be defined as *the departure from the truth that one professed to have.* It does not mean that they actually possessed the truth. Seldom do apostates actually possess the truth. Rather, it is a departure from a truth they professed to have because of an affiliation with a particular church. For example, a minister of a Baptist, Presbyterian, or Methodist Church is professing by virtue of his very position to believe the doctrines of the Baptist, Presbyterian, or Methodist Churches respectively. But actually the apostate denies these doctrines and has departed from the truth that he professes to have. This has indeed been the characteristic of the visible church of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

That there would be an apostasy of the church in the latter days was clearly predicted in two New Testament passages. First, in II Thessalonians 2:1-3, Paul wrote:

> *Now we beseech you, brethren, touching the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him; to the end that ye be not quickly shaken from your mind, nor yet be troubled, either by spirit, or by word, or by epistle as from us, as that the day of the Lord is just at hand; let no man beguile you in any wise: for it will not be, except the falling away come first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.*

This text will be dealt with in Appendix II. For now it is only necessary to show its connection with the problem of apostasy. As will be shown in Chapter 8, the term *Day of the Lord* is always a reference to the Tribulation period. In this passage two things are to occur before the Tribulation can begin, one of which is the *falling away.* The Greek word here is *apostosia*, which can be translated as "the apostasy." Before the Tribulation is to begin, the apostasy must come first. Thus, it was inevitable that the church would become apostate in the closing days of its history. The second thing to occur before the Tribulation is the revelation of the man of sin, *the son of perdition*.

The second passage is I Timothy 4:1:

> *But the Spirit says expressingly, that in later times some shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons.*

Again, the prophetic word declares that there would be a falling away or an apostasy from the faith. The Laodicean Church is a description of the apostasy of the last days.

In three New Testament passages there is a description of the *character* of the apostasy. The first is found in I Timothy 4:1-3:

> *But the Spirit says expressly, that in later times some shall fall* away *from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons, through the hypocrisy of men that speak lies, branded in their own conscience as with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from*

> *meats, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by them that believe and know the truth.*

This passage declares that the source of apostasy is demons, for apostates have essentially given in to seducing spirits and are preaching a system of doctrine which is a doctrine of demons. Furthermore, they speak lies through hypocrisy, and their conscience has become insensitive. Part of this demonic doctrine involves an attack on the believer's liberty characterized by the forbidding to marry and the instructing to refrain from eating meats. Such legalistic apostasy will increase as church history unfolds throughout the last days. These elements will become more prevalent in the visible church.

The second passage relating to the character of the apostasy is found in II Timothy 3:5:

> *Holding a form of godliness, but having denied the power thereof: from these also turn away.*

In verses 1-4, there is a description of the general character of the world during the last days, and it can hardly be denied that these elements are true in this present day. Verse five centers on the religious front, where the last days will be characterized by men having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. Apostate ministers, retaining the clerical garb and church titles, have a form of godliness. But they have denied the power thereof, for they have denied the true power of godliness.

The third passage is found in II Peter 2:1-22:

> *But there arose false prophets also among the people, as among you also there shall be false teachers, who shall privately bring in destructive heresies, denying even the Master that bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their lascivious doings; by reason of whom the way of the truth shall be evil spoken of. And in covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose sentence now from of old lingers not, and their destruction slumbers not. For if God spared not angels when they sinned, but cast them down to hell, and committed them to pits of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; and spared not the ancient world, but preserved Noah with seven others, a preacher of righteousness, when he brought a flood*

upon the world of the ungodly; and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, having made them an example unto those that should live ungodly; and delivered righteous Lot, sore distressed by the lascivious life of the wicked (for that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their lawless deeds): the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment unto the day of judgment; but chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of defilement, and despise dominion. Daring, selfwilled, they tremble not to rail at dignities: whereas angels, though greater in might and power, bring not a railing judgment against them before the Lord. But these, as creatures without reason, born mere animals to be taken and destroyed, railing in matters whereof they are ignorant, shall in their destroying surely be destroyed, suffering wrong as the hire of wrong-doing; men that count it pleasure to revel in the day-time, spots and blemishes, revelling in their deceivings while they feast with you; having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; enticing unstedfast souls; having a heart exercised in covetousness; children of cursing; forsaking the right way, they went astray, having followed the way of Balaam the son of Beor, who loved the hire of wrongdoing; but he was rebuked for his own transgression: a dumb ass spoke with man's voice and stayed the madness of the prophet. These are springs without water, and mists driven by a storm: for whom the blackness of darkness has been reserved. For, uttering great swelling words of vanity, they entice in the lusts of the flesh, by lasciviousness, those who are just escaping from them that live in error; promising them liberty, while they themselves are bondservants of corruption; for whom a man is overcome, of the same is he also brought into bondage. For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the last state is become worse with them than

> *the first. For it were better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after knowing it, to turn back from the holy commandment delivered unto them. It has happened unto them according to the true proverb. The dog turning to his own vomit again, and the sow that had washed to wallowing in the mire.*

Reading through the passage, one does not see Peter displaying any attitude of love or tolerance toward the apostates. The Bible is not tolerant toward apostasy and it castigates it very severely, as these verses clearly show.

Having described the character of apostasy, another question involves their teachings. What, after all, is *the mark of the apostate?* In II Peter 2:1, their teachings are portrayed as destructive denials:

> *But there arose false prophets also among the people, as among you also there shall be false teachers, who shall privately bring in destructive heresies, denying even the Master that bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction.*

The teachings of the apostates are called *destructive heresies*. The content entails *denying even the Master that bought them*. In other words, the content of apostate teaching involves the denial of the Person (*the Master*) and work (*bought them*) of the Messiah. Other New Testament passages provide more specific aspects of this denial. First, a denial of the Trinity is dealt with in I John 2:22-23:

> *Who is the liar but he that denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, even he that denies the Father and the Son. Whosoever denies the Son, the same has not the Father: he that confesses the Son has the Father also.*

Second, I John 4:2-3 comments on a denial of the Incarnation:

> *Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesses not Jesus is not of God: and this is the spirit of the antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it comes; and now it is in the world already.*

The same is true in II John 7:

> *For many deceivers are gone forth into the world, even they that confess not that Jesus Christ comes in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist.*

Third, the denial of the Second Coming of the Messiah is the concern of II Peter 3:3-4:

> *Knowing this first, that in the last days mockers shall come with mockery, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for, from the day that the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.*

Thus, the teachings of apostasy involve the destructive denials of the Person and work of the Messiah, especially with regard to His place in the Trinity, His deity, His incarnation as the God-Man by means of the Virgin Birth, and the fact that He is coming back physically. Basic to all these denials, of course, is the denial of the inspiration of the Scriptures themselves. Once a person moves away from the acceptance of the authority of Scripture, there is no longer any safeguard for other crucial doctrines.

In Jude 17-19, the *deeds or types of actions* preferred by apostates is given:

> *But ye, beloved, remember ye the words which have been spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; that they said to you, In the last time there shall be mockers, walking after their own ungodly lusts. These are they who make separations, sensual, having not the Spirit.*

One type of deed that will be performed by apostates is mockery (vv. 17-18). They will mock the fundamentals of the faith such as the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures, the Virgin Birth, the substitutionary death of the Messiah, and His physical resurrection from the dead. Second Peter 3:3-4 states that they will also mock the doctrine of the Second Coming. A second deed is that of creating schisms or separations (v. 19). Because they begin denying some of the fundamentals of the faith, they convince some but not others. In the course of time, the two factions develop into a split within the church. The process begun by mockery results in a division of the church. Throughout this age of apostasy there has been schism after schism. Church after church and denomination after denomination

have split over the destructive denials of the Trinity, the incarnation, and the Second Coming.

These characteristics, heretical teachings, and deeds of separations have become more prevalent as church history has progressed from about 1900 to the present day. This is the age of the Church of the Apostasy.

The roots of the present Age of Apostasy began in Europe, particularly with German rationalism, where the inerrency of the Scriptures was denied with the development of biblical criticism and the documentary hypothesis. If the present Age of the Apostasy had a definite beginning (and this is impossible to determine), for the United States, it might well have been January 20, 1891. On that day, a man named Charles Augustus Briggs gave his inaugural address at the Union Theological Seminary in New York City. At that time, Union was a Presbyterian seminary training ministers for Presbyterian pulpits. In his inaugural address, Briggs made six points, some of which involved destructive heresies: *First*, there are three great fountains of truth: the Bible, the church, and reason, thus, reason and the church became equal in authority with the Scriptures; *second,* not only were some of the Old Testament prophecies not fulfilled, but they were also reversed; *third,* he questioned the Mosaic authorship of the five books of Moses; *fourth,* he questioned the unity of Isaiah; *fifth,* he stated that those who died unsaved would have a second chance; and *sixth,* sanctification is not complete at death.

Briggs was not the first Modernist, but this address was the first public affirmation of Modernism in a theological seminary in the United States. Charges were brought against Briggs by the New York Presbytery on two occasions (1891 and 1893), but the charges were dropped, mainly to preserve the unity of the church rather than to deal with what was actually said. When the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church put Briggs on trial in 1893, he was suspended from the Presbyterian Church. As a result, Briggs became an Episcopalian, and the Union Theological Seminary withdrew from the Presbyterian Church and became independent. However, although the Union Theological Seminary became independent, they still continued to train ministers for the Presbyterian Church and for their pulpits. This set the stage for the way the apostasy would develop in the course of the twentieth century. Apostasy would first begin in a denominational

school and thus affect the training of ministers who were to fill the pulpits of the churches for those denominations. Eventually, more and more liberals took over the pulpits, and more and more churches became liberal themselves.

So throughout the first two decades of the twentieth century, apostasy took over the schools and trained ministers for the denominational churches. In an effort to stem the tide, in 1910 the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church issued the Five Fundamentals of the Faith, which included: *first*, the inspiration of Scriptures; *second,* the Virgin Birth; *third*, the substitutionary atonement; *fourth,* the resurrection of Jesus; and *fifth*, the miracles of Jesus. Those who subscribed to these five points were labeled "Fundamentalists," and so a new word was coined. Those who denied these fundamentals were called Modernists or Liberals. The General Assembly issued these in 1910 and reaffirmed them in 1916 and 1923.

The decade of the 1920s was characterized by the great Modernist-Fundamentalist battles. There were many attempts to fight Modernism from within the church. But toward the end of the decade, it became apparent that the Modernists were firmly in control of both the denominational church positions (this included all the major denominations except the Southern Baptist Convention) and their schools.

This led to the separatist movements of the 1930s as the Fundamentalists pulled out of denominations either by starting new denominations or by forming independent churches. Emerging from the United Presbyterian Church of the United States of America was a group led by J. Greshem Machen, which unfortunately split into three separate denominations (Orthodox Presbyterians, Bible Presbyterians, and the Evangelical Presbyterians) due to internal struggles. Out of the American Baptist Convention came the General Association of Regular Baptists (GARB). Out of the United Methodist Church came the Evangelical Methodists. The schisms that the Bible predicted would occur as a result of the apostasy began to occur in the separatist movements of the 1930s.

The 1940s to the present day have been characterized by ecumenical movements. In 1948, the World Council of Churches was organized on two principles: *First*, the unity of all churches on the basis of liberal tenets; and *second,* the unity of all religions. In 1950, the old Federal Council of Churches was reorganized into the National Council of Churches, again at-

tempting to unify all the churches in the United States along liberal tenets. Consequently, the visible church is primarily apostate today. Even among conservative denominations, some can already see the threat of apostasy in the taking over of the schools and the supplying of liberal ministers for the pulpits. Even the once strong Southern Baptist Convention has not escaped this trend. However, to their credit, there was a reversal of this trend in the decade of the nineties.

In more recent times, a whole new phase has entered the apostasy. The old phase was characterized by destructive denials. The new phase claims to affirm the fundamentals of the faith, but they have made a paradigm shift in that the Bible is no longer the final authority in determining divine truth, but experience is equally valid. In actual practice, the experience takes priority over the Scriptures. If the Bible contradicts the practice, then the practice is justified as being "a new move of the Spirit" and, therefore, what the text of Scripture actually says can be contradicted by a new experience. This is a far more "spiritual" way of denying the truth of God and, therefore, far more deceptive. The old apostasy was marked by *verbal* "destructive denials." The new apostasy is marked by *practical* "destructive denials." This, in turn, has led to many *strange and divers doctrines*, causing many to be truly *tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine* and resulting in total spiritual instability, as Paul warned would happen in Ephesians 4:8-16. They may affirm the authority and inspiration of Scripture, but it is only their experience that determines the meaning of the text in particular and truth in general. The new apostasy has produced the same fruit as the old apostasy. They mock those who will not join the "new wave" (or is it being caught in the undertow?) and they have caused schisms dividing both churches and families.

The proper way of determining truth is to go to the Word of God first and not rely on the experiences of other people. Furthermore, the Bible must be the final and only authority on all matters of both faith (what we believe) and practice (actions and experiences, etc.). Unfortunately, what has happened in recent years is that a new experience or phenomenon breaks out in some part of the church, and then people simply try to find verses to justify the activity rather than be willing to admit that the experience—no matter how wonderful or supernatural it felt—was simply not of God. Most of the proponents defend the practice, not on the basis of Scripture, but on the basis of their own experience. The most

common evidence is that it makes them feel happy and joyful, though this does not take into account that any kind of emotional release of this nature will make one feel better. Even unbelievers can have this same experience. Furthermore, Satan would not be a very good deceiver if he made one feel badly, would he? Satan can give people joyful and happy experiences, and doing so would be in his best interest if that—rather than the Word of God—becomes the final authority for determining spiritual truth.

Isaiah 8:16, 19-20 states:

> *Bind you up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples. . . . And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits and unto the wizards, that chirp and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? on behalf of the living should they seek unto the dead? To the law and to the testimony! If they speak not according to this word, surely there is no morning for them.*

One of the motifs of the Book of Isaiah is the contrast between the Remnant (Jews who believe) and the non-Remnant (Jews who do not believe). In verse 16, one crucial difference between the two groups is the place that the Scriptures have in their lives. The *law* is the Law of Moses, and the *testimony* is the words of the Prophets. What distinguishes the Remnant is that they believe that which Moses and the Prophets declared: that is the foundation of their faith, and this is also their authority. The non-Remnant rejects the Scriptures as the final authority and seeks to make God more "real in their experience" by going toward idolatry and looking at gods and goddesses that they could see, feel, and touch, creating a more visual picture while they worship. In verse 19, Isaiah issues a warning that they are not to go after counterfeit spirits and teachers *that chirp and that mutter.* In other words, Isaiah is warning people not to pursue supernatural things that cause them to make the strange sounds of chirping and muttering, for while these experiences might come from the supernatural, not all that comes out of the supernatural is of God, as verse 19 clearly shows. Indeed, those who go after those *that chirp and that mutter* could well come out with great testimonies of experiencing the supernatural and feeling joyful and great. But Isaiah would not accept any of that as valid testimony. The only valid testimony is what he declares in verse 20: *To the law and to the testimony!* In other

words, "Back to the Law and the Prophets," back to the Scriptures, as the only final authority. And the closing phrase should not be missed: *if they speak not according to this word, surely there is no morning for them.* Isaiah makes it quite clear: Regardless of the supernatural experiences the others may have, it does not align with the written Word of God that was already present in Isaiah's day, and so there is simply no morning light for them.

Later, Isaiah declared in 29:9-14:

> *Tarry ye and wonder; take your pleasure and be blind: they are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink. For Jehovah has poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and has closed your eyes, the prophets; and your heads, the seers, has he covered. And all vision is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray you; and he says, I cannot, for it is sealed: and the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray you; and he says, I am not learned. And the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw nigh unto me, and with their mouth and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear of me is a commandment of men which has been taught them; therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder; and the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.*

Isaiah introduces his comments, prophesying how people will become spiritually blind and, therefore, will stagger in spiritual blindness (v. 9). They will certainly stagger as if they were drunk, but not with alcohol. People have become spiritually blind and are groping in their spiritual darkness, having no spiritual sight to see. Isaiah points out that this has all happened because of divine judgment and is not merely accidental or coincidental (v. 10). What has happened is that because they refused to follow Isaiah's earlier admonition (8:20), they have now been confirmed in their spiritual darkness and, therefore, have fallen into a spiritual sleep so that now they have no capacity to understand the prophets. As a result, all of the prophecies of Isaiah and the prophets that came before him have become to the populace

as *a book that is sealed* (v. 11). When they are presented to someone who is learned, although he has had the capacity and training to understand these things, because he chose to pursue that which *chirp* and *mutter*, even for the learned one, the prophecies have become like a sealed book that he can no longer understand. Insofar as understanding spiritual truth, he has become like the one who is not trained or learned (v. 12), and the trained and learned one has the same incapacity and inability to understand the Word of God as the one who is untrained and unlearned. However, it is then made clear that outwardly these people appear both religious and spiritual (v. 13). They do continue drawing unto God with their mouths and they do honor God with their lips, but their hearts are far away from God. What makes their hearts far away from God is that whatever fear they have of the Lord is based upon man-made doctrines, commandments, and traditions, rather than that which God Himself had said and taught in the Scriptures. Thus today, the validity of a movement is based on the external. It is based on verbal pronouncements, such as "Praise the Lord" or "Praise Jesus," or some similar-sounding phrase that is consistently repeated. What the Bible-based observer must realize is that this is merely a formula, much like those who recite a *mantra* in eastern religions. Simply verbalizing the name of Jesus over and over again does not by itself prove anything. In fact, it fits this verse quite well: ...*and with their mouth and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me* (v. 13b). Their heart is far from God in reality for the same reason: they have learned to fear God on the basis of man-made and man-induced experiences, rather than on the basis of the Word of God (v. 13c). They are following these new man-made doctrines and repeat phrases they have been trained to repeat, believing that this repetition is what makes them spiritual. As a result, more time is spent on seeking further experiences than on actual study of the Word of God in its own context. The result is a further judgment where both wisdom and understanding begin to perish (v. 14). More and more, as people seek deeper and deeper experiences, they spend less and less time actually in the discipline of studying the Word of God, and they reach a point where they begin to totally lack understanding of the Word of God. While they can regularly do "God-talk" and "Jesus-speak," when they begin to deal with the concrete details of the Word of God, they are at a total loss. The more experiential they become, the less they understand of the Word of God.

What the Scriptures emphasize is that the final authority must be

the Scriptures, the written Word of God, and not anyone else's experience. Certainly, the Apostles could have related a great deal of their own experiences with Jesus in trying to defend their preaching about Jesus. One thing the Book of Acts keeps reemphasizing is that Paul, Silas and the others always made their final authority the Word of God and not their own experiences, as great as they were when they were personally with Jesus. One example is Acts 17:1-4:

> *Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: and Paul, as his custom was, went in unto them, and for three sabbath days reasoned with them from the scriptures, opening and alleging that it behooved the Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom, said he, I proclaim unto you, is the Christ. And some of them were persuaded, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few.*

By and large, one does not find Paul using his personal experiences, especially his key experience on the Damascus Road, as a tool for evangelizing. For Paul, the final authority had to be the Scriptures and not his own experience or testimony and, therefore, that was the focus of his evidence and that is what convinced so many. Those who came to believe (v. 4) did not do so because of any signs and wonders they saw Paul perform, but rather because of how he expounded the written Scriptures and showed how Jesus fulfilled the necessary Scriptures. The two times recorded where Paul does give his personal account as to how he became a believer on the Damascus Road is used as part of his defense when he is on trial. One does not find him using it in a situation where his goal was evangelism. There is a proper place for personal testimonies, but personal testimony can never be a final authority. Furthermore, people who have converted to other religions or cults—be it Mormonism, Jehovah's Witnesses or Christian Science—may also give powerful testimonies of how their lives have changed. That is why, here again, the final authority and criterion has to be the written Word of God. Testimonies can never be the final evidence of the authenticity of one's claims or beliefs.

Another example is Acts 18:28:

> *For he powerfully confuted the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the scriptures that Jesus was the Christ.*

This is speaking of Apollos; all that he had to say was also based on that which was written. The refutation of the unbelievers was not based upon signs and wonders, but on Scripture.

One more example can be found in Acts 28:23-24:

> *And when they had appointed him a day, they came to him into his lodging in great number; to whom he expounded the matter, testifying the kingdom of God, and persuading them concerning Jesus, both from the law of Moses and from the prophets, from morning till evening. And some believed the things which were spoken, and some disbelieved.*

Here again, what Paul used was not experience or signs and wonders. What he used was the Scriptures. His whole focus was on the Law and the Prophets, the written Scriptures of that day, to authenticate what he was teaching and preaching. The response was that some believed and some disbelieved, but those who did believe came to believe on the basis of the exposition of the written Word of God.

Besides the testimony of the Book of Acts, a good example where the focus was on the Scriptures and not on experience is what Peter says in II Peter 1:16-21:

> *For we did not follow cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there was borne such a voice to him by the Majestic Glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: and this voice we ourselves heard borne out of heaven, when we were with him in the holy mount. And we have the word of prophecy made more sure; where unto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts: knowing this first, that no prophecy of scripture is of private interpretation. For no prophecy ever came by*

> *the will of man: but men spoke from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit.*

Peter describes his experience at the Transfiguration when he saw the brightness of the *Shechinah* Glory manifested through the Messiah and heard the voice out of Heaven saying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased* (vv. 16-18). Indeed, Peter's experience on the Mount of Transfiguration was one of the highlights of that period of his life when he was with Jesus as a disciple. As convincing as the Transfiguration experience might have been to Peter, he points out that a far more authoritative base for believing that Jesus was the Messiah (and that this was not *cunningly devised fables*) is the Scriptures (vv. 19-21). Therefore, the written Scriptures themselves are what really made Peter's faith *more sure*. Peter does not encourage his readers to focus on Peter's experience on the Transfiguration, but rather on the Word of God, and it is the Scriptures, he says, that *ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a lamp shining in a dark place*. What makes the Scriptures truly the final authority and the basis for *more sure* doctrine than experience is the fact that the Scriptures were not produced by the will of man, but were the product of the Holy Spirit Who moved the Scripture writers to write exactly what He wanted them to record. Because the written Word of God is the product of the Holy Spirit, that is, indeed, the *word of prophecy made more sure*. Neither Peter's great experience at the Mount of Transfiguration, nor Paul's great experience on the Damascus Road, ever became the final authority for the faith of either. The final issue for both men was the written Word of God.

The response of some is: Isn't the manifestation of the supernatural the evidence that this is a work of God, even if it is not found in Scripture? And are not signs and wonders the evidence of the work of God, even if the specific signs and wonders are not found in Scripture? Here, again, the answer is a decisive "no," as the following two Scriptures again show. The first is Matthew 7:22-23:

> *Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by your name, and by your name cast out demons, and by your name do many mighty works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*

One should notice what these false teachers were able to do in the name of a counterfeit Jesus. Obviously, when they say they did it *in your name*, it means that they did use the name of Jesus and probably used it quite frequently. No doubt, it was their frequent use of Jesus' name that deceived so many. Furthermore, they were able to do three specific things: *prophesy* events which did come to pass; *cast out demons*; and do *many mighty works*, such as miracles of healing and other signs and wonders. Yet, *in that day*, Jesus will say to them: *I never knew you*. Here one has all the ingredients of some of the things that are happening in the new wave of apostasy. The name of Jesus is heavily used in almost ritual-*mantra* style, all kinds of signs and wonders are claimed to occur, and yet, by themselves these things do not prove anything because Satan can duplicate these. Here, again, it is important to get back to the written Word of God as the final criterion, the final source of authority, and the final foundation for all matters of faith and practice.

Another example of this same area is II Corinthians 11:3-4 and 13-15:

> *But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve in his craftiness, your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity and the purity that is toward Christ. For if he that comes preaches another Jesus, whom we did not preach, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye did not receive, or another gospel, which ye did not accept, ye do well to bear with him. . . . For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, fashioning themselves into apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for even Satan fashions himself into an angel of light. It is no great thing therefore if his ministers also fashion themselves as ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.*

Paul emphasizes the fact that just as Satan was able to deceive Eve, even the believers of the Corinthian Church can also be deceived by Satan, perhaps not directly by Satan as Eve was, but certainly by Satan's ministers (v. 3). It should be kept in mind that the Corinthian Church was highly involved in sensationalism, signs and wonders, and the experiential. Because the Corinthian Church based so much about its life on experience and the supernatural, that is what opened it up for deception by false teachers. Paul labels three things by the word *another* (v.4): *another Jesus, another gospel, another spirit*. The Greek, however, has two different words

here, both of which mean "another," but they carry a slightly different shade of meaning. The *first* term means, "another of the same kind"; the *second* term means, "another of a different kind." Rendering verse four a bit more literally from the Greek, it would read as follows:

> *For if he that comes preaches another Jesus of the same kind, whom we did not preach, or if ye receive another spirit of a different kind, which ye did not receive, or another gospel of a different kind, which ye did not accept, ye do well to avoid him.*

What Paul is saying is that the gospel being presented is another gospel of a "different kind," and the source is another spirit of a "different kind." However, the Jesus being presented is another Jesus of the "same kind"; a Jesus that sounds like and seems like the Jesus of the New Testament, but is a carefully disguised counterfeit. It should be noted that the name being used to foster the work of deception is the name of Jesus. It is a counterfeit Jesus, but it is a carefully disguised counterfeit, so that one who does not judge by the Word of God is very easily deceived. Paul makes it clear that those who are propagating another Jesus are *false apostles* (v. 13); however, that is not the way they appear because they fashion themselves to sound like, seem like, and act like real ministers of the Messiah. By so doing, they are reflecting their true lord, Satan, who is the angel of *this darkness* (Eph. 6:12) and who fashions himself to appear as *an angel of light* (v. 14). Paul says that this should not be surprising, for if Satan will fashion himself to appear as an angel of light, certainly his own ministers will fashion themselves to appear as ministers of righteousness, but in the end, they will receive their judgment (v. 15). Again, Satan would not be very successful in his work of deception, especially with believers, if his ministers were clearly and without question "out in far left field." To carry out the work of deception, they must certainly focus on the name of Jesus and not on some other name. But the mere usage of the name "Jesus," even in the context of words like "praise," "glory," etc., does not and should not authenticate anyone's ministry. Here, again, the final authority must be the Scriptures and not experience, signs and wonders, unusual activities, or strange noises.

The strange phenomena that have infiltrated the church should not have surprised people who are truly into the Word, for in I Timothy 4:1,

Paul declared:

> *But the Spirit says expressly, that in later times some shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons, . . .*

There is, of course, biblical doctrine; but here, Paul is talking about the fact that Satan has his own system of doctrine, referred to as *doctrines of demons*. Those who become enamored with *doctrines of demons* end up *giving heed to seducing spirits*. What are these *doctrines of demons*? They are such doctrines that find no basis in the written Word of God and are only based on teachers' claiming to have received special, divine revelation from God that, therefore, must be accepted as new truth. Those who involve themselves in such *doctrines of demons* end up being seduced by demonic spirits. Again, there are those who will come and defend these actions based upon how happy, good, or joyful they feel, assuming that such good feelings must be of the Lord. But all this shows is that they have, indeed, been seduced by demons. Again, Satan would not be very successful in his program of deception if his strategy was to make people feel badly. That is not going to attract much of an audience. What will attract an audience is people who can do things to make one feel good, even if the feeling is nothing more than an emotional release; but if the feeling can be ascribed to a supernatural work of God, the recipient has been deceived.

The Bible itself has given the major admonition by which one must judge all that claims to be of the Lord: the written Word of God. First Corinthians 4:6 states:

> *Now these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that in us ye might learn not to go beyond the things which are written; that no one of you be puffed up for the one against the other.*

Again, it should be emphasized that Paul is saying this to a church which had a strong tendency to move towards the sensational and the experiential. But the focus on the experiential only showed that they were not spiritual, but carnal (I Cor. 3:1-3). Paul must especially admonish a church of this nature *not to go beyond the things which are written*. That which is written, of course, is the Holy Scriptures. For any new manifestation or phenomenon, they must go back and test it by the Word of God. If it is something that goes beyond that which is written, then it must be

rejected out of hand. It is sufficient to know that if it is not in Scripture, they have gone beyond that which is written and, therefore, it is already evident that this thing is not of God. What happens to those who do go beyond that which is written? Paul declares that they become *puffed up for the one against the other*. They develop a spiritual pride that is evident when they go around claiming to be able to judge the Word of God by their experience.

There is one more Scripture that must be dealt with in this discussion, and that is II Timothy 3:12-4:4:

> *Yea, and all that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But evil men and imposters shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. But you abide in the things which you have learned and have been assured of, knowing of whom you have learned them; and that from a babe you have known the sacred writings which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work. I charge you in the sight of God, and of Christ Jesus, who shall judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word; be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure the sound doctrine; but having itching ears, will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and turn aside unto fables.*

Paul gives a simple message that is largely ignored by much of the modern movements today: those who seek to live godly lives will suffer persecution (v. 12). The truth is that health and wealth are not signs of divine favor or spirituality. Rather, it is being persecuted for the faith that is a sign of a truly godly person.

Paul, then, issues a warning that as time goes on there will be more and more false teachers who are truly imposters and who will go around deceiving others, many of whom will be deceived themselves (v. 13). They may well believe that they are "God's anointed" and keep repeating it to

their critics, but the fact remains that they have become deceived themselves and, therefore, proceed to deceive others as well.

So what is it that will protect Timothy from being deceived by all these false teachers? Paul answers that question in verses 14-17. Timothy is encouraged to continue in what he has learned (v. 14), and what he has learned is that since he was a child, he has been trained in *the sacred writings* (v. 15). Notice that the same emphasis found in I Corinthians 4:6 is found here: the written Word of God, *the sacred writings*. There are two things that will keep Timothy from being deceived: his knowledge of the sacred writings, and his continuing to *abide* in the sacred writings. The word *abide* has the basic meaning, "to make your home." He is to make his home in the sacred writings. His focus is not to be on any personal experiences, no matter how supernatural they may be; as already seen in Matthew 7:22-23, his focus should not be on signs and wonders that can lead to deception as well, but he must abide in the written Word of God. What Peter said in II Peter 1:20-21, Paul says in verse 16 that the Scriptures are the inspired Word of God and, therefore, are profitable in all areas. Just how profitable are the written Scriptures? Paul answers that question, saying that the Scriptures can make the man of God to be complete himself, while also making him *furnished completely unto every good work* (v. 17). What this verse is teaching must not be missed. The Scriptures are sufficient to make one thoroughly complete. The written Scriptures are able to thoroughly complete one and furnish one for every work that one needs to do. One can become spiritual and mature in the faith through the Scriptures alone. However, this will take the discipline of studying the Word of God, spending hours, days, weeks, and years of a lifetime to comprehend more and more of the Word of God. But in this technological age, people have become lazy and, therefore, seek the "instant breakfast" approach to spirituality, sometimes even feeling they have become a god themselves. According to this passage, such experiences will not lead to spirituality, but instead will lead to being deceived and then continuing to deceive others as well.

Because Timothy is knowledgeable of the Scriptures, because the Scriptures are able to thoroughly furnish him for every good work, Paul then admonishes Timothy to go ahead and do the work of the ministry—reproving, rebuking, exhorting, and teaching (4:1-2). But this teaching is not done by any divine revelation outside of Scripture; rather, this is done

by the written Word of God, as Paul already stated in 3:16.

Then, Paul again declares what will happen in the latter days and, unfortunately, what Paul described has, indeed, finally happened (vv. 3-4). Paul states that a day will come when believers will no longer be able to *endure the sound doctrine* (v. 3). What is *sound doctrine*? In contrast to the *doctrines of demons* (I Tim. 4:1), which are doctrines based upon the experiential and the supernatural which go beyond that which is written, sound doctrine is that which is based upon and comes from *the sacred writings*. Indeed, we are living in a day when the majority of believers in our churches simply cannot *endure sound doctrine*. In place of expository teaching of the Word, there are, instead, "Christian amusements parks" and Christian talk shows that carry little, if any, doctrinal substance. A speaker who causes people to become hysterical or act like animals or fall down, can fill up entire stadiums with thousands upon thousands of people who will eventually be asked to empty their pockets for the offering. But one who comes to expound the Word of God, to impart an understanding of the Scriptures and sound doctrine, will draw a relatively tiny audience. Indeed, the time and day have arrived when men cannot *endure sound doctrine*. How will they try to meet their spiritual needs? Paul goes on to explain that they *will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts*. In other words, they will pursue teachers who will tell them what they want to hear and not what they really need to hear (being persecuted for godly living is not something believers want to hear about); they will pursue teachers who will promise them supernatural experiences; they will pursue teachers who will promise them health and wealth by merely using a formula; teachers who promise materialism in a spiritually-wrapped package are the ones they will pursue. But they will strongly avoid having to sit through in-depth teaching of the Word of God. Indeed, that day has finally arrived. Most mega-churches today were not built up through expository teaching, but through entertainment. Church programs are based on what people want, not what they need. Paul tells us the result of not enduring sound doctrine and pursuing false teachers (v. 4): *first*, they will *turn away their ears from the truth*, and *second*, they will *turn aside unto fables*. Fables are teachings and doctrines outside of Scripture. As seen earlier, Peter said he did not follow *cunningly devised fables*, because what he was teaching and preaching was based upon the written Word of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit. The reason Timothy will not be swept aside to follow fables is because he is

basing his entire life, teaching, and ministry on *the sacred writings*. Those who go beyond the things which are written will end up following after fables. Again, fables are teachings that are not found in Scripture, and therefore either originate with man or with the demonic world, and thereby become doctrines of demons. Fables are the false postulations of experiences and actions that are found nowhere in Scripture.

Returning to our original passage, the *exhortation* in Revelation 3:18-20 is a call to salvation. *First*, they are urged to seek spiritual wealth in the Messiah. *Second*, because they are spiritually naked, they are urged to receive the white garments of salvation from Jesus. Throughout the book of Revelation the white garments represent and symbolize salvation. In Revela-tion 3:4 these garments are on people considered worthy; in 3:5 they are coupled with not being blotted out of the Book of Life; in 6:11 they are seen as the garments of the saints in heaven; in Revelation 7:9, 13, and 14, the garments are white because they have been washed in the blood of the Lamb. The key problem in the Laodicean church is that they are spiritually naked and lack salvation. Therefore, they are urged to appropriate it from Jesus. *Third*, because they are spiritually blinded, they are urged to seek Messiah's eye salve so that they can begin to see spiritually. There is no indication that this is a saved church. While all the other churches have had at least a small saved element in it, this church has none whatsoever. Hence, there is a complete absence of commendation for it.

Verse 20 emphasizes that the Messiah is outside this church, knocking. Jesus is not in any way within this church, for it is a totally unsaved church. The exhortation is to any individual in the apostate church to hear Messiah's voice and open his heart to Him, and then Messiah will enter and they will have fellowship. It is another exhortation to salvation.

The *promise* is in verses 21-22. The one who overcomes the problem of apostasy and accepts Jesus is promised a share in the Messianic Kingdom.

What are the responsibilities of believers in the face of apostasy? First, believers are not to fellowship with apostates. On this point there has been too much extremism. It must be kept in mind that an apostate is not merely an unbeliever, nor is he merely a member of an apostate church. The apostate is one who is actively propagating within the local church the destructive denials of the Trinity, the Virgin Birth, the deity of the Son, and the Second Coming. The apostates about whom the Bible talks are not mere unbelievers, but are teachers of apostate doctrines who

propagate their destructive denials. That the believer is not to fellowship with such an individual is spelled out in II John 7-11:

> *For many deceivers are gone forth into the world, even they that confess not that Jesus Christ came in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist. Look to yourselves, that ye lose not the things which we have wrought, but that ye receive a full reward. Whosoever goes onward and abides not in the teaching of Christ; has not God: he that abides in the teaching, the same has both the Father and the Son. If any one comes unto you, and brings not this teaching, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting: for he that gives him greeting partakes in his evil works.*

The second obligation concerns the apostate that is in the local church. If a member is found proclaiming a destructive denial, he is to be ousted from the church, as Paul stated in Galatians 1:8-9:

> *But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema. As we have said before, so say I now again, if any man preaches unto you any gospel other than that which ye received, let him be anathema.*

The third area of responsibility concerns the situation where apostates are in control of the leadership of the church and cannot be ousted. What should a believer do in this case? The obligation here is separation from the church, for he is to be separated from apostasy. In II Timothy 3:5, after characterizing apostates as having *a form of godliness but denying the power thereof*, Timothy is admonished: *from these also turn away.* Timothy was urged to separate himself from such apostasy.

A more extended treatment of this problem is found in II Corinthians 6:14-7:1:

> *Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers: for what fellowship have righteousness and iniquity? or what communion has light with darkness? And what concord has Christ with Belial? or what portion has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has a temple of God with idols? for we are a temple of the living God; even as God said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come ye out from*

> *among them, and be ye separate, says the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; And I will receive you, And will be to you a Father, And ye shall be to me sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty. Having therefore these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.*

This is an important passage, for it admonishes the believer to separate himself from the apostates and not to continue to worship with them in the assembly. Verse 14a has usually been used to refer to marriage between believers and unbelievers, but the context is dealing with a worship situation and not marriage. Worshiping with unbelievers is considered an unequal yoke.

Verses 14b-16a provide the reasons why this is an unequal yoke. It must be kept in mind that this is in a context of worship. Five questions are asked which, in the Greek, demand negative answers. Five terms are given around which the reasons revolve: fellowship, communion, concord, portion, and agreement. There can be no *fellowship* between unrighteousness and righteousness. Believers are a part of righteousness, whereas unbelievers are a part of iniquity, and there can be no fellowship between the two in the same church. Furthermore, there is no *communion* between light and darkness. Believers are of the light, but unbelievers are of the darkness. There is no common ground between the two. There can be no *concord* between Messiah and Satan. They have two separate areas of operation. They have two distinct programs. The believer is part of Messiah's program, while the unbeliever is part of Satan's program. The believer has no *portion* with unbelievers. One is destined for Heaven and the other is destined for Hell. Their two destinies are very different and in worship mutually exclusive. Finally, there is no *agreement* between the Temple of God and the temple of an idol. The believer is indwelt by the Holy Spirit, but the unbeliever is not. Because there is no fellowship, communion, concord, portion, or agreement in the area of worship, worshiping with an unbeliever is an unequal yoke.

In verse 16b, Paul gives the basis for separation, that is, that we are the Temple of God. Since we are the Temple of God, we are not to place ourselves in a worship situation with unbelievers.

In 17a, the command of separation involves three phrases: First, *come ye out from among them*; second, *be ye separate*; and third, *touch no unclean thing*.

In verses 17b-18, a promise is given to those who comply and separate themselves. Just as there are three phrases of separation, there are three statements of promises for those who obey: First, *I will receive you*; second, *I will be to you a Father*; and third, *you will be to me sons and daughters*.

In 7:1 the passage concludes, urging the believer, on the basis of these promises, to follow through on his separation from apostasy where necessary.

FOUR

The Sequence of Pretribulational Events

The Great Tribulation is not imminent. The world stage has to be set in a certain way before the Tribulation can actually begin. A number of events are clearly stated to precede the Tribulation period. Some of these pretribulational events are simply prophesied as occurring some time before the Tribulation and are not related to any sequence of events. These will be discussed in the next two chapters. But this chapter is concerned with the chronological sequence of those events which can be traced and lead up to the Tribulation. The Tribulation will not begin until this sequence of events is completely worked out. All together nine such events can be deduced from the Scriptures. On one hand, these events come before the Tribulation; but on the other, they consecutively lead up to the Tribulation.

A. World Wars I and II

A question that is raised so many times in prophetic conferences is: "Are we living in the last days?" Invariably the answer is: "Yes!" But when asked, "How do we know?", the answers tend to be rather general and usually rest on crises of these present days, and these crises change with the times. Often they are determined on the basis of how these crises affect the United States, as if that is the determining factor of what constitutes the last days. However, the true determination of where history is moving prophetically is not how world events affect the United States, but how they impact Jewish history since Israel is God's timepiece (Deut. 32:8-9). In this area many "newspaper exegetes" have had a field day, seeing almost every major world event as a partial fulfillment of prophecy and another proof that these are indeed the last days. However, it is very dangerous to spend so much

time and so much effort trying to fit so many events into areas of fulfilled prophecy. Prophecy must first be determined from the Scriptures and then applied to current events, rather than current events being taken and forced into some kind of scriptural passage. Only after one's eschatology has been developed exegetically from the Scriptures should current events be taken into account to see if there are any that are fulfilling prophecy. Only if the current events fit the demands of Scripture *perfectly* are these events to be identified as a fulfillment of prophecy. But to go to current events first and then, because of *possible similarities,* begin to identify these as partial fulfillments or as indications of future fulfillments is to engage in "newspaper exegesis" rather than biblical exegesis.

Nevertheless, these are the last days because certain pretribulational events have been fulfilled. The first is that of World War I followed by World War II. This is found in the Olivet Discourse[1] in Matthew 24:1-8:

> *And Jesus went out from the temple, and was going on his way; and his disciples came to him to show him the buildings of the temple. But he answered and said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. And as he sat on the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of your coming, and of the end of the world? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man lead you astray. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am the Christ; and shall lead many astray. And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars; see that ye be not troubled: for these things must needs come to pass; but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines and earthquakes in divers places. But all these things are the beginning of travail.*

The background to the prophecy is found in verses 1-2. Following the denunciation of the Jewish religious leadership in chapter 23,

[1] A more detailed study of the Olivet Discourse may be found in Appendix V.

and as a follow up of His statements in 23:37-39, in 24:1-2 Messiah pronounced doom on the Temple, a prophecy fulfilled in A.D. 70.

This statement aroused questions in the minds of the disciples, and they approached Jesus with these three questions: first, *When shall these things be?*, i.e., the destruction of the Temple spoken of in verses 1-2; second, *What shall be the sign of Your coming?*; i.e., "What is the sign that the Second Coming is about to occur?"; and third, What shall be the sign of the end of the age? The first question is not answered in the Matthew account of the Olivet Discourse, but is found in the parallel passage of Luke 21:20-24. The second question is answered in Matthew 24:29-31.

It is the third question that is of concern here: What shall be the sign of the end of the age? These are typical Jewish expressions of that time. The rabbis spoke of two ages: this age, and the age to come. "This age" is the age in which we now live. "The age to come" is the Messianic Age. Their question is: What is the sign that marks that the end of this age has indeed begun? What is the one single event that will determine that the last days have begun and that we are indeed living in the last days?

This question is answered by Jesus, first negatively and then positively. Negatively, He first told them what will not be the sign that the end of the age has begun. This was followed positively by what the sign will indeed be.

Verses 4-6 contain the negative answer. He simply described what will be characteristic of this age, and none of these things mean that the end of the age has begun. First, in verses 4-5, the age will be characterized by false messiahs. But the rise of false messiahs in no way proves that the end has begun. Furthermore, in verse six, local wars in various parts of the world will also characterize this age. But this, too, does not mean that the end of the age has begun. So neither the rise of false messiahs, nor local wars in any part of the world indicate that the end of the age has begun. These are just general characteristics of this age: *for these things must needs come to pass; but the end is not yet.*

The positive side of the answer is in verses 7-8, where He revealed the single event that will indicate that the end of the age has begun. This sign is said to be when *nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom*. This is to be coupled with famines and

earthquakes. It is clearly stated that these things are *the beginning of travail.* Throughout the prophetic portions of Scripture, the end days are pictured by the word *travail*, which means "birth pang," the pain a woman goes through before giving birth to a baby. Just as a woman goes through a series of birth pangs before giving birth to a child, even so the closing days of this age will go through a series of birth pangs before giving birth to the new age of the Kingdom. The use of the word *travail* will be noted a number of times as the prophetic Scriptures are studied in this work.

The key factor, then, is to find out the meaning of the idiom, *nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom*. This idiom, taken in the Jewish context of the day when it was spoken, points to a total conflict of the area in view. This idiom is found in two Old Testament passages.

First, it is found in Isaiah 19:1-4:

> *The burden of Egypt. Behold, Jehovah rides upon a swift cloud, and comes unto Egypt: and the idols of Egypt shall tremble at his presence; and the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of it. And I will stir up the Egyptians against the Egyptians: and they shall fight every one against his brother, and every one against his neighbor; city against city, and kingdom against kingdom. And the spirit of Egypt shall fail in the midst of it; and I will destroy the counsel thereof: and they shall seek unto the idols, and to the charmers, and to them that have familiar spirits, and to the wizards. And I will give over the Egyptians into the hand of a cruel lord; and a fierce king shall rule over them, says the Lord, Jehovah of hosts.*

In this passage the land of Egypt is in view and the idiom points to a conflict all over the land of Egypt as the nation is engrossed in civil war.

The second place is in II Chronicles 15:1-7:

> *And the Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Obed: and he went out to meet Asa, and said unto him, Hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin: Jehovah is with you, while ye are with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you. Now for a long season Israel was without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law: but when in their distress*

> *they turned unto Jehovah, the God of Israel, and sought him, he was found of them. And in those times there was no peace to him that went out, nor to him that came in; but great vexations were upon all the inhabitants of the lands. And they were broken in pieces, nation against nation, and city against city; for God did vex them with all adversity. But be ye strong, and let not your hands be slack; for your work shall be rewarded.*

In this passage it is the Middle East that is in view, and the idiom points to conflict all over the Middle East. In the Olivet Discourse it is the whole world that is in view, as is clear from verses 14, 21, 30, and 31. Hence, the idiom refers to a worldwide conflict, and this worldwide conflict is the first birth pang, signifying that the last days have begun.

In Jesus' day, the expression of *nation against nation, kingdom against kingdom* was a Jewish idiom of a world war preceding the coming of the Messiah. The *Bereshit Rabbah*[1] states:

> *If you shall see kingdoms rising against each other in turn, then give heed and note the footsteps of the Messiah.*

The *Zohar Chadash* states:

> *At that time wars shall be stirred up in the world, Nation shall be against nation and city against city; much distress shall be renewed against the enemies of the Israelites.*

The first time that such a worldwide conflict occurred was in the years 1914-1918 with World War I. Most historians agree that World War II was really a continuation of World War I. Both had a decisive impact on Jewish history. The events of the First World War provided the impetus for the growth of the Zionist Movement, while the Second World War set the stage for the establishment of the State of Israel.

This worldwide conflict that signaled the beginning of the last days was to be coupled with famines and earthquakes. As far as famines are concerned, during the war years of 1918-1919, a pestilence killed 23 million people. In 1920, the Great Chinese Famine occurred, followed by the Great Russian Famine in 1921.

[1] XLII:4

The earthquake factor is even more interesting. According to the *Encyclopedia Americana,* between the years 63-1896 there were only 26 recorded earthquakes. Most of the world's earthquakes began to occur since 1900.[2] In conjunction with World War I, there were several significant earthquakes: 1905 India—19,000 killed; 1906 Chile—20,000 killed; 1908 Italy—70,000-100,000 killed; 1915 Italy—30,000 killed; 1917 Indonesia—15,000 killed; 1918 China—10,000 killed; 1920 China—200,000 killed; 1923 Japan—143,000 killed.

Subsequent and devastating earthquakes include: 1927 China—200,000 killed; 1932 China—70,000 killed; 1933 China—10,000 killed; 1934 India—10,700 killed; 1935 Pakistan—30,000-60,000 killed; 1939 Chile—28,000 killed, Turkey—30,000 killed; 1948 Russia—110,000 killed; 1960 Morocco—10,000-15,000 killed; 1962 Iran—12,000 killed; 1968 Iran—12,000-20,000 killed; 1970 China—10,000 killed, Peru—66,000 killed; 1974 China—20,000 killed; 1975 China—10,000 killed; 1976 Guatamala—23,000 killed, China—255,000 killed, Philippines—8,000 killed; 1978 Iran—15,000 killed; 1988 Russia-Turkish Border—25,000 killed; 1990 Iran—40,000-50,000 killed; 1999 Turkey—15,600 killed.

There has been a tremendous increase in earthquake activity in conjunction with World War I.[3] The ones listed here are only the major ones with death rate of 10,000 or more. Added to this are a greater number with smaller death rates. One article gave the following figure:

> In the first 1000 years after Jesus, there were approximately 5 recorded major earthquakes (although we are sure more occurred in remote locations). However, the trend has been on the increase:
> 14th century, there were 157 major earthquakes.
> 15th century, there were 174 major earthquakes.
> 16th century, there were 253 major earthquakes.

---

2 United States Geological Survey, National Earthquake Information Center, Earthquakes with 1,000 or More Deaths from 1900. URL: http://neic.usgs.gov/neis/eqlists/eqsmajr.html. 12 May 2000.

3 These statistics however should be tempered with the fact that man's ability to detect earthquakes worldwide has equally increased; nevertheless, the statistics are significant.

17th century, there were 278 major earthquakes.
18th century, there were 640 major earthquakes.
19th century, there were 2119 major earthquakes.
Nearly 900,000 earthquakes have been recorded thus far in the 20th century. An earthquake every hour![4]

The first sign or the first birth pang signifying that the last days of the age have begun was to be a worldwide conflict coupled with famines and earthquakes. This was fulfilled in 1914-1918. This also marks the first of the events leading up to the Tribulation period.

B. The Reestablishment of Israel

On the topic of the modern State of Israel in Bible prophecy, one will hear four views giving four different perspectives. The author holds to a fifth view.

The first view is the view of Replacement Theology, particularly Amillenialism, which sees the modern Jewish State as purely an accident of history, totally unrelated to any type of Bible prophecy. This first view believes that when Israel rejected the Messiahship of Jesus, God was through with the Jewish people. Therefore, there are no unfulfilled prophecies for the Jewish people and there is no future final restoration. When Israel rejected the Messiah, all of God's covenantal promises were transferred to the Church; hence it is a theology of transference. Or, put differently, when Israel rejected the Messiah, the Church replaced Israel in God's standing; hence a theology of replacement. Thus, the Church is fulfilling Israel's promises. What about all those prophecies that speak of a worldwide regathering of the Jewish people? Their answer: these are not to be interpreted literally, but allegorically of the elect being brought into the Church until the Church is complete. Jews could be saved today, but they simply would be amalgamated into the larger Church; God has no future restoration for Israel as an ethnic people. And so nothing happening with Israel today is in any way related to prophecy. There is no future prophecy for Israel either, and so again the modern Jewish State is nothing but an accident of history.

[4] "Dispatch from Jerusalem," 3rd Quarter, 1992, p. 11.

The second view takes the opposite view in that they do believe there will be a final restoration of Israel. They take these prophecies literally and believe that there will be a future final restoration of the Jewish people to the Promised Land. However, when they look at the modern Jewish State, they have a hard time fitting the modern Jewish State into Bible prophecy. The reason is that these prophecies describe the final regathering of Israel as a believing nation in the Messiah. The chronological sequence of these prophecies is: national repentance followed by national restoration. When they look at the present Jewish State, the vast majority are unbelievers in the Messiah; in fact, of the 5.1 million Jews in the Land today, only about four to five thousand, maximum, are Jewish believers. To make it worse, the vast majority of Israelis are not even Orthodox; they would class themselves quite secularly, either as atheistic or agnostic. This does not fit these prophecies as they read. These prophecies include: Deuteronomy 30:1-5; Isaiah 27:12-13; Ezekiel 39:25-29, *et al.* These prophecies clearly speak of a national salvation prior to a national restoration to the Land. So they disagree with the first view in that they do believe there will be such a future, final restoration. But they would agree with the first view that the modern Jewish State is an accident of history; it is not relevant to Bible prophecy at all.

The third view claims that what is happening today **is** the final restoration of Israel; this is the beginning of the fulfillment of all those prophecies. There will be more and more Jews going back to the Land until all are back. At some point, they will undergo a national regeneration and salvation, and the Messiah will return. When asked about the prophecies that speak of a period of divine wrath and tribulation preceding this time, they would say that the Tribulation prophecies have already been fulfilled in the Holocaust. The Nazi Holocaust fulfilled all the prophecies about the Tribulation, and so there is no future Tribulation to come. It has already passed, and what we are seeing today is the final restoration. Emissaries of this third view are traveling around the world encouraging Jews to return. They also go to groups of Jewish believers, messianic fellowships and congregations, laying guilt trips on Jewish believers claiming that if they do not go back to Israel right away, they are living in sin. God is now calling all Jews, particularly Jewish believers in the Messiah, back to their Land. To live outside the Land, such as "the flesh-pots of America,"

would be living in sin. When asked for biblical passages to prove it, they refer to those prophecies where the prophets called the Jews to leave Babylon. They interpret these passages on Babylon not to be real Babylon past or future, but Babylon represents the United States of America. When one points out that these prophecies mention the Euphrates River, which is in Babylonia, they claim that the river is not really the Euphrates; it is the Hudson River in New York City! That would surprise prophets like Jeremiah, among others. And so, in this third view, this is the final restoration; this is the fulfillment of those prophecies, at least in the initial stages.

The fourth view will be discussed later in this section.

What the first three views fail to observe is that when the Bible speaks of a worldwide regathering of the Jewish people, it actually speaks of two distinct worldwide regatherings. This is the fifth perspective. First, there is to be a worldwide regathering in unbelief in preparation for judgment; specifically, the judgment of the Tribulation. That is to be followed by a second worldwide regathering in faith in preparation for blessing, specifically, the blessing of the Messianic Kingdom.

The prophecies that speak of the worldwide regathering in faith in preparation for blessing are discussed in chapter 19 on "Israel in the Messianic Kingdom." This section will focus on those prophecies that clearly speak of a worldwide regathering in unbelief in preparation for judgment. Once it is recognized that the Bible speaks of two such regatherings, it is easy to see how the present State of Israel fits into prophecy.

One passage clearly dealing with a return in unbelief in preparation for judgment is found in Ezekiel 20:33-38:

> *As I live, says the Lord Jehovah, surely with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out, will I be king over you: and I will bring you out from the peoples, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out; and I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there will I enter into judgment with you face to face. Like as I entered into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so*

> *will I enter into judgment with you, says the Lord Jehovah. And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant; and I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me; I will bring them forth out of the land where they sojourn, but they shall not enter into the land of Israel: and ye shall know that I am Jehovah.*

In these verses, Ezekiel draws a simile with the Exodus when, under Moses, God brought the entire nation of Israel out of the land of Egypt, and brought them into the wilderness of the Sinai Peninsula. God's plan and program for Israel at Sinai was to accomplish two things: first, they were to receive the Law of Moses; and second, they were to build a Tabernacle through which much of the Law could then be maintained. With these two things accomplished, they were to press on and enter into the Promised Land itself. But because of a series of rebellions and murmurings against God's revealed will, finally at the Oasis of Kadesh Barnea, which was right on the border of the Promised Land, God entered into judgment with His people. The divine judgment was that those who came out of Egypt would now have to continue wandering throughout the wilderness for forty years. During those forty years, all those who came out would die out, except for two righteous spies, and those below the age of twenty. So forty years later it was a new nation that was allowed to enter the Land under Joshua, a nation that was born as free men in the wilderness, not as slaves in Egypt. That historical frame of reference is the backdrop for the future. But this time, Ezekiel prophesies, God will regather His people from all parts of the world. It should be noted that it is a regathering *out of* wrath, and a gathering *for* wrath. They were gathered *out of* the wrath of the Holocaust. The events of the Nazi Holocaust, when six million Jewish people died, created the world stage for Israel to become a state, for the regathering in unbelief. That this gathering is not in faith, but in unbelief, is seen from the fact that this gathering is *with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out*. This phrase is repeated twice and is found in verses 33 and 34. God's goal is that of Messianic Kingship, but the means of attaining it will be by wrath and judgment. This is a gathering both out of wrath and for wrath. This regathering in unbelief occurs after wrath has been poured out on the people. But because it is a regathering in unbelief, it is a regathering *for* a future time of wrath. In that future time

of wrath, God will once again enter into judgment with His people, and will purge out the rebels among them. Those who remain will turn to the Lord; they will be brought into *the bond of the covenant*; specifically, the bond of the New Covenant (Jer. 31:31-34). They will be brought into national salvation. Then it will be a new nation, a regenerate nation, that will be allowed to enter the Land under King Messiah for the final restoration. In these verses, Ezekiel clearly describes a worldwide regathering in unbelief, *from* wrath and *for* wrath, in preparation for a specific period of judgment that will then lead to a national salvation, and in turn to their final restoration.

Another passage making the same point is found in Ezekiel 22:17-22:

> *And the word of Jehovah came unto me, saying, Son of man, the house of Israel is become dross unto me: all of them are brass and tin and iron and lead, in the midst of the furnace; they are the dross of silver. Therefore thus says the Lord Jehovah: Because ye are all become dross, therefore, behold, I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem. As they gather silver and brass and iron and lead and tin into the midst of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it, to melt it; so will I gather you in my anger and in my wrath, and I will lay you there, and melt you. Yea, I will gather you, and blow upon you with the fire of my wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof. As silver is melted in the midst of the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof; and ye shall know that I, Jehovah, have poured out my wrath upon you.*

Again, Ezekiel describes a regathering, this time focusing upon the City of Jerusalem. Jerusalem becomes the furnace of affliction, a common figure pointing to Israel's need for refining (Is. 1:22, 25; 48:10; Jer. 6:27-30; 9:7; Zech. 13:9; Mal. 3:2-3). Furthermore, it is also a regathering in unbelief because they are filled with the impurities of *brass and iron and lead and tin*. They are also regathered for a future time of wrath, when the wrath of God will be poured upon them for the purpose of melting them and to purify them. As a purified, believing nation, they will then turn to the Lord. Here again he speaks of worldwide regathering in unbelief in preparation for a specific future judgment, but the purpose of the judgment is to bring them to national repentance. Only then will they experience the final worldwide restoration in faith.

While primarily dealing with the regeneration of Israel, Ezekiel 36:22-24 nevertheless makes it clear that a regathering takes place *before* the regeneration:

> *Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord Jehovah: I do not this for your sake, O house of Israel, but for my holy name, which ye have profaned among the nations, whither ye went. And I will sanctify my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the nations shall know that I am Jehovah, says the Lord Jehovah, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes. For I will take you from among the nations, and gather you out of all the countries, and will bring you into your own land.*

Another passage dealing with the same question is found in Isaiah 11:11-12:

> *And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord will set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, that shall remain, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And he will set up an ensign for the nations, and will assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.*

In this connection, the fourth view needs to be discussed. This view recognizes that there are two types of regathering prophecies: a regathering in unbelief and a regathering in faith. But then the fourth view goes on to say that we really cannot be sure that the present Jewish State, as we see it today, is a fulfillment of those prophecies that spoke of the regathering in unbelief. Why not? Because they believe that it is possible to have several regatherings in unbelief before there is the specific one that fulfills the prophecies just discussed. But this passage in Isaiah shows that is exactly what cannot be: there cannot be several regatherings in unbelief from *the four corners of the earth*. The entire context is Isaiah 11:11-12:6. In this context, he is speaking of the final worldwide regathering in faith in preparation for blessing. Isaiah numbers the final worldwide regathering in faith in preparation for the Messianic Kingdom as the *second* one. In other words, the last one

is only the second one. If the last one is the second one, how many can there be before that? Only one. The first one could not have been the return from Babylon since that was not an international regathering from the four corners of the world, only a migration from one country (Babylonia) to another (Judea). The Bible does not allow for several worldwide regatherings in unbelief; it allows for *one* worldwide regathering in unbelief, followed by the last one, the one in faith, which is the second one. This text only permits two worldwide regatherings from *the four corners of the earth*. Therefore, the present Jewish State *is* very relevant to Bible prophecy.

So far passages have been shown that speak of a regathering in unbelief in preparation for judgment as over against other passages that speak of a regathering in faith in preparation for blessing. But these passages have not specifically stated that this regathering in unbelief in preparation for judgment will occur before the Tribulation period. However, there are other passages that do pinpoint the regathering in unbelief as occurring before the Tribulation period.

One such passage is Zephaniah 2:1-2:

> *Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation that has no shame; before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of Jehovah come upon you, before the day of Jehovah's anger come upon you.*

In the preceding section of Zephaniah 1:7-18, Zephaniah described some features of a time called *the Day of Jehovah*, or as other translations have it, *the Day of the Lord*. As will be shown in Chapter VIII, this term *always* describes the Great Tribulation. It is the most common Old Testament name for the Tribulation. Then in 2:1-2, Zephaniah speaks of an event that is to occur *before* the Day of Jehovah begins. In verse one, the nation of Israel is told to gather together. It is clear from this verse that this is a gathering in unbelief for it is a nation not yet ashamed of her sins. In verse two, the word *before* is used three times in relation to the preceding passage regarding the Tribulation. One of these "befores" includes *before the day of Jehovah* itself. So while other texts speak of a regathering in unbelief in preparation for judgment, this passage clearly states that this regathering in unbelief will occur before the Tribulation actually begins.

Another line of evidence can be mentioned at this point, but will be developed in Chapter 9. It concerns the beginning point of the Tribulation period. The Tribulation begins with the signing of the seven-year covenant (not with the Rapture). This covenant is made between the Antichrist and the leaders of Israel. Therefore, the signing of such a covenant presupposes a Jewish leadership of a Jewish State. Such a Jewish State has to exist before such a covenant is signed. This demands the existence of a Jewish State before the Tribulation.

Thus, 1948 marked another birth pang of the last days. The restoration of the Jewish State is a fulfillment of those prophecies that spoke of a regathering in unbelief in preparation for judgment. It is another event leading up to the Tribulation and so sets the stage for several other pretribulational events.

C. Jerusalem Under Jewish Control

The third pretribulational event involves the Jewish control of Jerusalem. The fact that the Jewish State had to exist before the Tribulation does not necessarily require the total Jewish control of Jerusalem. After the end of the Israeli War of Independence in 1948-1949, Israeli forces were in control of West Jerusalem, the newer Jewish section. The Old City of Jerusalem (the biblical city) fell into the hands of the Jordanian Legion and was later annexed into the Hashemite kingdom of Jordan. So Jerusalem became a divided city and remained that way for the next 19 years.

Nevertheless, prophetically speaking, the Old City of Jerusalem had to fall under Jewish control. This can be deduced from the prophecies dealing with the third Jewish Temple, sometimes known as the Tribulation Temple. There are four passages of Scripture that speak of a specific event in relation to the Tribulation Temple that will occur in the middle of the Tribulation. They are as follows:

> *And he shall make a firm covenant with many for one week: and in the middle of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease; and upon the wing of abominations shall come one that makes desolate; and even unto the full end, and that determined, shall wrath be poured out upon the desolate.* (Dan. 9:27)

> *When therefore ye see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let him that reads understand).* (Mat. 24:15)

> *Let no man beguile you in any wise: for it will not be, except the falling away come first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, he that opposes and exalts himself against all that is called God or that is worshipped; so that he sits in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God.* (II Thes. 2:3-4)

> *And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and one said, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. And the court which is without the temple leave without, and measure it not; for it has been given unto the nations: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.* (Rev. 11:1-2)

All these passages speak of the third Jewish Temple, namely the Tribulation Temple. More will be said concerning the Tribulation Temple in the next chapter. But for now, suffice it to say that the Jewish Temple will be rebuilt and will begin to function again, for these verses view the Jewish Temple as having been rebuilt and functioning. All these verses also presuppose Jewish control of the Temple Compound, and that presupposes Jewish control of the Old City of Jerusalem.

While none of these passages spell out a time factor as to when this was to occur, it was clearly fulfilled in the Six Day War and thus became the third birth pang. While the Six Day War itself was never predicted in the Scriptures, what it accomplished certainly was. The Six Day War brought about the fulfillment of the prophecy regarding the Jewish control of the Old City of Jerusalem. This is the third major pretribulational event.

While the first three of these events have already been fulfilled and are now a part of history, the next six pretribulational events are all future.

D. The Northern Alliance Invasion of Israel—Ezekiel 38:1-39:16

1. The Exposition of the Passage

Ezekiel 38:1-39:16 describes an invasion of Israel from the north and the subsequent destruction of the invading forces once they reach the area of *the mountains of Israel*. It will first be necessary to look at the details of this invasion and then deal with the controversial question as to *when* this invasion will take place. The passage will be approached with the questions of who, where, why, what, how, and when?

a. The Alliance—Ezekiel 38:1-6

Concerning *who*, in Ezekiel 38:1-6 the prophet named the peoples involved in this invasion:

> *And the word of Jehovah came unto me, saying, Son of man, set your face toward Gog, of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal, and prophesy against him, and say, Thus says the Lord Jehovah: Behold, I am against you, O Gog, prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal: and I will turn you about, and put hooks into your jaws, and I will bring you forth, and all thine army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed in full armor, a great company with buckler and shield, all of them handling swords; Persia, Cush, and Put with them, all of them with shield and helmet; Gomer, and all his hordes; the house of Togarmah in the uttermost parts of the north, and all his hordes; even many peoples with you.*

In verses 1-4, attention is centered on *Gog,* leader of the *land of Magog.* He is the prince of *Rosh, Meshech,* and *Tubal.* Who Gog will be can only be determined at the time of the invasion, for "Gog" is not a proper name but a title for the ruler of Magog, just as the terms "pharaoh," "kaiser," and "czar" were titles for rulers and not proper names. Whoever is ruling this alliance at the time of the invasion will be Ezekiel's Gog. The identification of *Magog*, *Rosh*, *Meshech*, and *Tubal* is to be determined from the fact that these tribes of the ancient

world occupied the areas of modern-day Russia. Magog, Meshech, and Tubal were between the Black and Caspian Seas, which today is southern Russia. It also includes part of Iran and Turkey. According to some, the tribes of Meshech and Tubal later gave names to cities that today bear the names of Moscow, the capital, and Tobolsk, a major city in the Urals in Siberia. *Rosh* was in what is now northern Russia. The name *Rosh* is the basis for the modern name *Russia.* These names, then, cover the modern territories of northern and southern Russia in Europe and Siberia to the east in Asia. The modern nation of Russia encompasses all these areas of Ezekiel. As if to avoid any further possible doubt, verse six adds that these come from *the uttermost parts of the north.* This is repeated in 38:15 and 39:2. From Israel the uttermost parts of the north is Russia, with Moscow being almost a straight line due north from Jerusalem. Hence, Russia is the leader of the northern confederacy, with Gog as the leader of Russia. This has also been the rabbinic view. The *Artscroll Commentary* on Ezekiel states:

> *The Gaonim had a tradition that these controls were indeed located in Russia... One tradition passed down from the Vilna Gaon states: When the Russian navy passes through the Bospores (that is, on the way to Dardanelles), it will be time to put on Sabbath clothes (in anticipation of the coming of the Messiah).*

In the Gog and Magog war, Messiah the son of Joseph will be killed which will then bring the coming of the Messiah the son of David.

But Russia is not alone in the invasion of Israel. She is part of a confederacy and the leader of it. Other nations involved are listed in verses 5-6. Involved in the confederacy is *Persia*, or present-day Iran. Once, Iran was generally pro-western and pro-Israel; after the Khomeini Islamic revolution, Iran became anti-western and anti-Israel and more within the Russian sphere of influence. At the time of this revision, Israel considers Iran as its most dangerous enemy. Another nation involved is called *Cush*. There were two places that had that name. One was in Mesopotamia (Gen. 2:13). But all other usages of this word refer to Ethiopia. While looking at current events, it is tempting to identify it with the Mesopotamian countries of Syria and Iraq, consistency with the usage of the word "Cush" elsewhere in the Scriptures demands its identification with Ethiopia. Current

events must never be the means of interpreting the Scriptures, but the Scriptures must interpret current events.

Put is mentioned next, which is not Libya (for which the name Lub would be used), but Somaliland or Somalia. Somalia borders Ethiopia. This is followed by *Gomer*, located in present-day Germany. This too was the rabbinic view. The *Midrash* calls Gomer *Germania*[5] and that is also the way the *Talmud* refers to Gomer. The last name is *Togarmah*, which is present-day Armenia. Verse six adds the phrase, *even many peoples with you*. This phrase may simply define the numbers of the nations already mentioned, or it may include other nations not mentioned. In all probability, it is the former that is meant. In answer as to *who* is involved in this confederacy, it is Russia and the allied states of Iran, Ethiopia, Somalia, Germany, and Armenia.[6]

One interesting observation is that not a single Arab nation participates in this invasion. While some of the nations listed here are Moslem, they are not Arab. Another observation is that these nations are geographically located both north and south of Israel, but it is Russia that is the controlling nation and allied with Moslem, but non-Arab, states. The invasion itself is from the north. A common error made in previous interpretations of this passage has been the assumption that this was a communist invasion. The fall of communism in Eastern Europe has caused many to abandon the "Russian" interpretation of this passage. But there is no need to do so. It should be noted that the text never describes the type of government when this invasion occurs. It does not indicate whether it is a monarchy, socialistic, communistic, democratic, or dictatorial government. The focus is on the geography, not the type of government. While the names of these geographical areas have changed over the centuries (e.g., Persia to Iran), and may change again, the geography itself remains intact. Regardless of what names they may carry at the time of this invasion, it is these very geographical areas that are involved. Although the leading nation may have once been

5 *Midrash Rabbah* 37:1.

6 While present events concerning these nations appear to be lining them up in such a confederacy, these are nevertheless current events which may quickly change. It is too early to say, "This is it." It is necessary to wait for exact fulfillment before identifying fulfillment.

called the Soviet Union, and more recently the Commonwealth of Independent States, and traditionally Russia, it is this territory—by whatever name it may be called at that time—that will lead this invasion. The Orthodox Jewish commentary *Artscroll* on Ezekiel 38:2 makes this observation:

> *"*Yerushalayim Megillah *3:9, which renders Magog as* Gutiya *(or* Gutya*, . . .) the Goths, a group of nomadic tribes who destroyed the Scythians and made their home in Scythian territory.*
>
> *Considering that the Goths were a Germanic people, the identification of Magog's descendants as the Goths in accord with* Targum Yonasan *to Genesis 10:2, which renders Magog as* Geramemia*, which in* Bereshit Rabbah *37:1 is given as* Germanya*."*

The cup of iniquity of Russia is almost full. With this invasion it will overflow, and this will precipitate God's judgment on Russia. It is God Who is in control; it is He who is bringing the invasion about. Thus, while studying this passage, one should note the sovereignty of God in this invasion. This will be the means by which God will punish Russia for her sins. The key sin is her long history of anti-Semitism, a problem that persists in Russia to this day.

b. The Object of the Invasion—Ezekiel 38:7-9

The next section of this passage, Ezekiel 38:7-9, answers the question as to *where* the invasion takes place:

> *Be you prepared, yea, prepare yourself, you, and all your companies that are assembled unto you, and be you a guard unto them. After many days you shall be visited: in the latter years you shall come into the land that is brought back from the sword, that is gathered out of many peoples, upon the mountains of Israel, which have been a continual waste; but it is brought forth out of the peoples, and they shall dwell securely, all of them. And you shall ascend, you shall come like a storm, you shall be like a cloud to cover the land, you, and all your hordes, and many peoples with you.*

This passage continues to address Gog as the leader of this confederacy (v. 7). In verse eight, the specific place where the invasion takes place is stated to be the Land of Israel, more specifically in the mountains of Israel. Then verse nine describes the massiveness of the invasion, picturing it as a storm cloud that covers the entire Land. This is another passage that shows the necessity of the establishment of the Jewish State and also a regathering in unbelief. Israel has to be a state before this invasion can occur. Regardless of one's viewpoint as to when this invasion occurs, each viewpoint does require the preexistence of the Jewish State. Furthermore, Israel in this passage is regathered in unbelief, for only after the invasion do many in Israel turn to the Lord. So yet another passage demands a restored Jewish State in unbelief. Verse eight describes this Jewish State as being *first*, a land brought back from the sword; *second*, a land that is gathered out of many peoples; *third*, a land with mountains that have been a continual waste; and *fourth*, a land that is brought forth out of the peoples. Ezekiel is not describing an Israel that ever existed in ancient times, but all these statements are true of present-day Israel. This began occurring toward the end of the nineteenth century, culminating with statehood in 1948. Since then, the *waste places* have been rebuilt and resettled on a more massive scale.

c. Gog's Goal—Ezekiel 38:10-13

The next section, in Ezekiel 38:10-13, answers the question as to *why* this invasion takes place on the part of Russia:

> *Thus says the Lord Jehovah: It shall come to pass in that day, that things shall come into your mind, and you shall devise an evil device: and you shall say, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell securely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates; to take the spoil and to take the prey; to turn your hand against the waste places that are now inhabited, and against the people that are gathered out of the nations, that have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the middle of the earth. Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof, shall say unto you, Are you come to take the spoil? have you assembled your*

company to take the prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take great spoil?

The key reason for the Russian invasion is the matter of *spoil* (vv. 10-12). Exactly what Israel has that Russia would want is not spelled out in the text. The text simply mentions *cattle and goods* and *silver and gold,* but these are general Old Testament references for spoils of war. Much speculation has been involved in what it is that Israel has that Russia would want. One of the more popular reasons given is that of the Dead Sea, which contains 45 billion tons of sodium, chlorine, sulfur, potassium, calcium, magnesium, and bromide. But Russia could also obtain the Dead Sea by invading Jordan. Another reason centers on the oil crisis, with the abundance of oil in the Middle East. The purpose of the invasion might be to gain a solid foothold in the Middle East. A Russian takeover of Israel would give Russia such a foothold without overly upsetting the Arabs, since they would be in favor of the destruction of Israel even if it means a Russian army in the area. However, while it may be true that the Arabs would like to see Israel destroyed, it is not true they would look favorably on a Russian occupation force in the Middle East. There have been other suggestions; however, the text itself is silent as to the content of the spoils. But for the spoils Russia invades. Whatever the publicly stated reasons for this invasion may be, the actual reason will be Russia's own self interest. It is stated in verse ten that the invasion is premeditated by the Russians, for they *devise an evil device* and resolve to invade for the purpose of spoils (vv. 11-12).

In verse 13, a second group of nations are listed as protesting this invasion, for they recognize it to be an invasion for spoil and for nothing else. *Sheba* and *Dedan* are countries in northern Arabia, which shows that at least some of the Arab states will not favor the Russian presence in the Middle East. Another nation named is *Tarshish*, followed by the phrase *with all the young lions thereof*. This phrase is a Hebrew idiom meaning nations that have come out of *Tarshish*. The Revised Standard Version translates the idiom as *all its villages* and it is close to the mark. But while the idiom is clear, the real issue is the identity of Tarshish from which the other nations come out. Three such places are known in history. One was located on the east coast of Africa, but the exact location is unknown. Nor has that particular area spawned other nations. The second place was in Spain, founded by

the city of Tyre. If this is the Tarshish of Ezekiel, the nations spawned would include those of Central and South America, except for Brazil. The third location was in England, and if this is what was meant by Tarshish, it would include the United States of America, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and other present-day western democracies. It might include the British Commonwealth of Nations. If any conclusion can be reached on Ezekiel's usage elsewhere, the identification would have to be Spain and the Spanish-speaking world of the western hemisphere. Since Spain was somewhat involved in settling and discovering the North American coastline, it could include the United States. But historically, Spain cannot really be credited with the United States as England can. Regardless of the exact identity of Tarshish, it is this group that issues a protest. However, it does not go beyond the protest stage. Russia succeeds in invading, and then the invading army is disposed of with no help from the protestors.

d. God's Goal—Ezekiel 38:14-16

In Ezekiel 38:14-16, the invasion is seen as having begun and further answers the question as to *why,* but this time it is seen from God's viewpoint:

> *Therefore, son of man, prophesy, and say unto Gog, Thus says the Lord Jehovah: In that day when my people Israel dwell securely, shall you not know it? And you shall come from your place out of the uttermost parts of the north, you, and many peoples with you, all of them riding upon horses, a great company and a mighty army; and you shall come up against my people Israel, as a cloud to cover the land: it shall come to pass in the latter days, that I will bring you against my land, that the nations may know me, when I shall be sanctified in you, O Gog, before their eyes.*

In verses 14-16a, the invasion begins and the confederate army covers the land like a storm cloud in massive swarms. Hence, there is initial success on the part of Russia. In verse 16b, God's reason is given for allowing this invasion to occur, as over against Russia's reasons given in the preceding verses: that He might be sanctified in the eyes of the nations in light of what is about to occur.

e. The Destruction of the Invaders—Ezekiel 38:17-23

Having described God's purpose, the answer to the questions of *what* and *how* are answered in Ezekiel 38:17-23:

> *Thus says the Lord Jehovah: Are you he of whom I spoke in old time by my servants the prophets of Israel, that prophesied in those days for many years that I would bring you against them? And it shall come to pass in that day, when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, says the Lord Jehovah, that my wrath shall come up into my nostrils. For in my jealousy and in the fire of my wrath have I spoken, Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel; so that the fishes of the sea, and the birds of the heavens, and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that are upon the face of the earth, shall shake at my presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground. And I will call for a sword against him unto all my mountains, says the Lord Jehovah: every man's sword shall be against his brother. And with pestilence and with blood will I enter into judgment with him; and I will rain upon him, and upon his hordes, and upon the many peoples that are with him, an overflowing shower, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone. And I will magnify myself, and sanctify myself, and I will make myself known in the eyes of many nations; and they shall know that I am Jehovah.*

As to the question of *what*, with the Russian invasion of Israel, the cup of iniquity is full, for the apple of God's eye is touched, and the Wife of Jehovah is violated, arousing God's anger so that He moves out in judgment (vv. 17-18) to destroy the invading army. This is followed by the answer to the question of *how* the invading army is disposed of and destroyed. Several causes are listed: earthquake (vv. 19-20); civil war breaking out among the invading soldiers themselves (v. 21); pestilence, blood, flood, hailstones, fire, and brimstone (v. 22). Since these things totally destroy the invading army without the aid of other nations, God's purpose is seen as succeeding in its objective. God is indeed sanctified in the eyes of many people (v. 23).

f. The Place of the Destruction—Ezekiel 39:1-6

Ezekiel 39:1-16 follows *The Law of Recurrence* (see Chapter I), giving further details to the information found in chapter 38. In 39:1-5 there is a further description of the invasion and its subsequent destruction:

> *And you, son of man, prophesy against Gog, and say, Thus says the Lord Jehovah: Behold, I am against you, O Gog, prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal: and I will turn you about, and will lead you on, and will cause you to come up from the uttermost parts of the north; and I will bring you upon the mountains of Israel; and I will smite your bow out of your left hand, and will cause thine arrows to fall out of your right hand. You shall fall upon the mountains of Israel, you, and all your hordes, and the peoples that are with you: I will give you unto the ravenous birds of every sort, and to the beasts of the field to be devoured. You shall fall upon the open field; for I have spoken it, says the Lord Jehovah.*

The new information added is found in verses two and four, where the armies are said to fall specifically on *the mountains of Israel*. They extend the length of the center of the country, beginning at the southern point of the Valley of Jezreel at the town of Jenin in Galilee (biblical Ein Ganim), and continuing south until they peter out at a point north of Beersheba in the Negev. These mountains contain the famous biblical cities of Dothan, Shechem, Samaria, Shiloh, Bethel, Ai, Ramah, Bethlehem, Hebron, Debir, and most importantly, Jerusalem, which seems to be the goal of this invading army.

Here is another example where the Six Day War has set the stage for the fulfillment of prophecy. Up to the Six Day War in 1967 all of the mountains of Israel, except for a small corridor of West Jerusalem, were entirely in the hands of the Jordanian Arabs. Only since 1967 have the mountains *of* Israel been *in* Israel, thus setting the stage for the fulfillment of this prophecy.

Another thing to notice is the mistranslation found in the King James Version of verse two. The King James Version indicates that one-sixth of the invading army is left alive. This is not found in the Hebrew text and has not been translated that way by subsequent translations. It is not true that one-sixth of the invading army will

be left alive. The entire invading army will be destroyed when they invade Israel and nothing will remain, not even one-sixth.

In Ezekiel 39:6 another dimension is added to the Russian invasion:

> *And I will send a fire on Magog, and on them that dwell securely in the isles; and they shall know that I am Jehovah.*

Not only is the Russian and allied army destroyed in Israel, but the land of Russia itself is devastated by the raining of brimstone, causing much destruction in the nation itself. It will cause Russia to cease being a political force in world affairs.

g. The Sanctification of God's Name—Ezekiel 39:7-8

Ezekiel 39:7-8 adds that not only will God's name be sanctified among the Gentile nations, but in Israel as well:

> *And my holy name will I make known in the midst of my people Israel; neither will I suffer my holy name to be profaned any more: and the nations shall know that I am Jehovah, the Holy One in Israel. Behold, it comes, and it shall be done, says the Lord Jehovah; this is the day whereof I have spoken.*

Thus, a revival occurs in Israel, causing many Jews to turn to the Lord.

h. The Seven Years of Burning—Ezekiel 39:9-10

The rest of the section provides the grand finale of the invasion. In Ezekiel 39:9-10 it states that it will take seven years to dismantle all the military equipment left behind, which in turn will be used for fuel:

> *And they that dwell in the cities of Israel shall go forth, and shall make fires of the weapons and burn them, both the shields and the bucklers, the bows and the arrows, and the handstaves, and the spears, and they shall make fires of them seven years; so that they shall take no wood out of the field, neither cut down any out of the forests; for they shall*

> *make fires of the weapons; and they shall plunder those that plundered them, and rob those that robbed them, says the Lord Jehovah.*

i. The Seven Months of Burial—Ezekiel 39:11-16

Finally, in Ezekiel 39:11-16 there is a description of the burying of the dead for seven months:

> *And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will give unto Gog a place for burial in Israel, the valley of them that pass through on the east of the sea; and it shall stop them that pass through: and there shall they bury Gog and all his multitude; and they shall call it The valley of Hamon-gog. And seven months shall the house of Israel be burying them, that they may cleanse the land. Yea, all the people of the land shall bury them; and it shall be to them a renown in the day that I shall be glorified, says the Lord Jehovah. And they shall set apart men of continual employment, that shall pass through the land, and, with them that pass through, those that bury them that remain upon the face of the land, to cleanse it: after the end of seven months shall they search. And they that pass through the land shall pass through; and when any sees a man's bone, then shall he set up a sign by it, till the buriers have buried it in the valley of Hamon-gog. And Hamonah shall also be the name of a city. Thus shall they cleanse the land.*

The burial place will be in one of the valleys east of the Mediterranean Sea (v. 11), which would put it in the Jordan Valley above the Dead Sea, and will be renamed accordingly. It will take seven months to accomplish the job (vv. 12-13). Since the armies are destroyed in the mountains of Israel, many of the bodies will fall in crevices where they will not be easily found, and so special details will be employed by the government for the seven months to search out these bodies for burial in the special valley (vv. 14-15). Overlooking the cemetery a new city will be built and named *Hamonah*, which means "multitude." (v. 16).

These seven months of burying and seven years of burning are crucial in determining *when* this invasion occurs. For any view to be

correct, it must satisfy the requirements of these seven months and seven years.

2. The Timing of the Invasion

The most controversial question is *when*; when in the chronology of prophecy will this event occur? It is obvious from where the event is placed in this work that the author views the Russian invasion as taking place some time *before* the Tribulation.

a. Basic Observations

In determining the issue of when, certain clues are to be found in the text. In 38:8, 11-12, and 14, the invasion takes place when, *first*, Israel is a state again; *second*, the waste places of past centuries are again inhabited; *third*, Israel is dwelling in unwalled villages, a good description of present-day *kibbutzim*; and *fourth*, Israel is dwelling securely. As will be shown later, nowhere in the entire text does it speak of Israel as living in peace. Rather, Israel is merely living in security, which means "confidence," regardless of whether it is during a state of war or peace.

There is nothing in the various descriptions of Israel given in this passage that is not true of Israel today. So, as far as where Israel stands today, she completely fulfills all the requirements given in the description of Israel in this passage. From this standpoint, the invasion can occur at any time, including some time before the Tribulation.

Furthermore, there is the problem of the seven years and the seven months which must be taken into account in resolving the issue of *when*.

There are four major views as to when this invasion will occur. The opposing views will be looked at first along with their bases, followed by the objections against their views. Then, in conclusion, reasons will be given as to why this invasion would best be viewed as occurring before the Tribulation period. Objections to this view will be answered.

b. The Midtribulation View

The first view held by some key prophetic Bible teachers puts this invasion in the middle of the Tribulation period. There is a twofold basis for this position. *First*, the dwelling securely is said to refer to a time of peace resulting from Israel's covenant with the Antichrist in Daniel 9:27. *Second*, this invasion is viewed as being the same as that of *the king of the north* in Daniel 11:40.

However, there are objections to this view. *First*, the term *to dwell securely*, as will be shown later, does not necessarily have to indicate peace. *Second*, it is hard to see why God would intervene at this point on Israel's behalf and then immediately allow the events of the second half of the Tribulation to commence, doing a great amount of damage to Israel. *Third*, it is agreed with those holding this position that the events described in Daniel 11:40 take place in the middle of the Tribulation. But it is wrong to identify *the king of the north* of Daniel 11:40 with *Gog* of Ezekiel 38:1-39:16. Throughout the Book of Daniel references are made to *the king of the south* and *the king of the north.* Consistently, the former is applied to Egypt, including the reference in verse 40. The latter is consistently applied to Syria, except when the exponents of this view come to verse 40; then they ascribe the reference to Russia and so identify it with Ezekiel 38 and 39. However, context and consistency would demand that the reference apply to Syria. The invasion of Daniel 11:40 is distinct from the Ezekiel 38 and 39 invasion. It is inconsistent and faulty exegesis to make *the king of the north* throughout the Book of Daniel refer to Syria and yet make 11:40 be the one exception in order to connect it with the Russian invasion and put the latter at the middle of the Tribulation. *Fourth*, this view fails to solve the problem of the seven months and seven years. This view would require that the seven months of burying take place during the second half of the Tribulation, a time when the Jews are in flight and are not able to bury their own dead, let alone those of the Russians. In the chapter dealing with the events of the middle of the Tribulation, the Jewish situation will be discussed in greater detail. The state of the Jews in the middle of the Tribulation will not permit seven months of burial and building a new city, too. Regarding the seven years of burning, this view would require the Jews to be burning weapons during the second half of Tribulation, when Jews are fleeing out of the Land.

They would also have to continue burning them for 3½ years into the Millennium, which is inconsistent with Messiah's cleansing of the Land and the renovation which results. The problems the Jews will face during the second half of the Tribulation would cause them to try to preserve and salvage these weapons rather than to burn them.

c. The Posttribulation/Armageddon View

A second major view is that this invasion will take place at the end of the Tribulation period. The key basis of this position is identifying this invasion as the Campaign of Armageddon. Since the Campaign of Armageddon does indeed take place at the end of the Tribulation, and since Ezekiel 38 and 39 are viewed as being part of it by those who hold this view, they have concluded that the Russian invasion will occur at the end of the Tribulation.

However, there are a number of problems with this view. The key objection lies in the clear distinction between the Ezekiel 38-39 invasion and Armageddon. *First*, in Ezekiel there are definite allies mentioned and they are limited in number, while other nations stand in opposition. In the Campaign of Armageddon, all nations are allied together against Jerusalem without exception. *Second*, the Ezekiel invasion comes from the north, but the Armageddon invasion comes from the whole earth. *Third*, the purpose of the Russian invasion is to take the spoil; the purpose of the Armageddon Campaign is to destroy all the Jews. *Fourth*, in the Ezekiel invasion, there is a protest against the invasion; in the Armageddon Campaign, there is no protest because all the nations are involved. *Fifth*, the Ezekiel invasion is destroyed through convulsions of nature; the Armageddon invasion is destroyed by the personal Second Coming of Jesus the Messiah. *Sixth*, the Ezekiel invasion is destroyed on the mountains of Israel; the Armageddon Campaign is destroyed in the area between Petra and Jerusalem. *Seventh*, the Russian invasion takes place while Israel is living securely in the Land; the Armageddon Campaign takes place while Israel is in flight and in hiding.

Furthermore, this view fails to solve the problem of the seven months and seven years, since both would have to continue into the Millennium to be accomplished. Again, this is inconsistent with other revelation regarding the Kingdom, which starts out with a thoroughly cleansed earth.

d. The Interlude View

A third major view is to put this invasion in the interlude between the Tribulation and the Millennium. The basis of this position is the assumption that there is to be a period of time after the Second Coming and after Israel is restored but before the actual Kingdom is set up.

But there are objections to this view. *First*, this view is based on the assumption of a period of time between the Second Coming and the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom. The fact that there will be an interlude is easily accepted, since there are a number of things which need to be accomplished before the actual institution of the Millennium, such as the judgment of the Gentiles, the resurrection of the Old Testament and Tribulation saints, etc. There will, indeed, be an interlude. But the problem is that if this view is to be consistent, it must make this interlude seven years long. However, Daniel 12:12 limits the interlude to just 75 days. The second half of the Tribulation is declared to be 42 months or 1,260 days long, which is the same as saying 3½ years. Daniel 12:7 refers to it as *a time, times, and a half*. Daniel 12:11 states that there will be a total of 1,290 days during which time the Temple will be desecrated. In other words, the Temple's desecration will extend 30 days beyond the 3½ year period. However, in Daniel 12:12 those who manage to make it to the 1,335th day (an additional 45 days) are promised a unique blessing which could hardly be anything else but the Millennium. That many will not make it to this day is clear from other Scriptures, since they are killed in the interlude. But the interlude is limited to 75 days only, and this is not enough time for all the events of Ezekiel to transpire. *Second*, the main problem with this view is that it fails to give a satisfactory answer to the problem of the seven months and seven years. Seven months of burial is a total of 210 days. This would mean that the burial would continue for at least 135 days into the Millennium depending on when during the interlude the invasion takes place. This is not consistent with the mass of Scripture describing the Millennium and Israel. Added to this are the seven years of the burning of the weapons which make this view impossible.

e. End of Millennium View

A fourth major view puts it at the end of the Millennium. The

key basis of this view is to identify this invasion as the same as that mentioned in Revelation 20:7-9.

But there are two key objections to this view. *First*, the Ezekiel invasion comes from the north; the Revelation invasion comes from all over the world. *Second*, this view also fails to answer the problem of the seven months and the seven years. This earth is done away with soon after the invasion mentioned in Revelation, not allowing any time (or place!) for seven months of burial or seven years of burning. It would require the burying and burning to continue into the Eternal Order.

f. The Pretribulation View

The fifth major view, which is the view of this author, is that the Russian invasion will occur before the Tribulation actually begins. From the text of Ezekiel 38:1-39:16, this view arrives at certain conclusions. *First*, Israel is established before the Tribulation and is dwelling securely. *Second*, the Russian confederacy invades Israel during this time of security before the Tribulation. *Third*, the confederacy is destroyed in Israel before the Tribulation.

(1) Support

There are several points supporting this view. *First*, the description of Israel found in this passage fits well with the nation as she is now, established before the Tribulation. Israel is a land brought back from the sword (38:8). After 1900 years, 46 invasions, and the War of Independence, the Land is Jewish again and free from foreign domination. This nation is gathered from many nations and peoples (38:8, 12). The Jews in Israel today come from 80-90 different nations. The continual waste places are now inhabited (38:8, 12). The Israelis today are rebuilding the ancient places and turning them into modern towns and cities. They dwell securely (38:11, 14). This has often been misconstrued as meaning a state of peace, but this is not the meaning of the Hebrew root *batach.* The nominal form of this root means "security." This is not the security due to a state of peace, but a security due to confidence in their own strength. This, too, is a good description of Israel today. The Israeli army has fought four major wars since its founding and won them swiftly each time. Today Israel is secure, confident that her army can repel any

invasion from the Arab states. Hence, Israel is dwelling securely. Israel is dwelling in unwalled villages (38:11). This is very descriptive of the present-day *kibbutzim* in Israel.

Second, Russia today, in spite of the fall of communism, is still a major world power before the Tribulation. Her rise to this position coincided with the reestablishment of Israel following World War II.

Third, this view best answers the problem of the seven months and seven years. Putting this invasion in the *beginning of the Tribulation* presents no real problem with the seven months, but it does have problems with the seven years. This would put it at a time when Israel would be in flight and would not have time to finish the burning of the weapons. *The middle of the Tribulation view* has problems with both the seven months and the seven years. The seven months would extend into the second half of the Tribulation, a time when Israel has to worry about her own dead, let alone the Russians. The seven years would extend throughout the rest of the Tribulation and 3½ years into the Millennium, making it inconsistent with the biblical view of the Millennium. Furthermore, Israel would need these weapons in the second half of the Tribulation. *The end of the Tribulation view* has problems with both the seven months and the seven years, since both would extend into the Millennium. *The interlude view* or *beginning of the Millennium view* has problems with both the seven months and the seven years, since both would extend into the Millennium due to the fact that the interlude is only 75 days. *The end of the Millennium view* has problems with both seven months and the seven years. The seven months of burial seem pointless when there is a resurrection after the invasion. The seven years would have to extend into the Eternal Order, an impossibility since there is a whole new earth created. Therefore, the *before the Tribulation view* is the only one which has no problems with either the seven months or the seven years. The Jews continue to dwell in the Land after this invasion and remain there until the middle of the Tribulation. Hence, the seven months of burial is no problem. The seven years also create no problem since they would begin before the Tribulation and can extend as far as the middle of the Tribulation if at all necessary. According to this view, this invasion must take place at least 3½ years or more before the Tribulation starts.

These are the strengths of this particular view. However, there are objections raised to this particular view, and these will now have to be answered.

(2) Objections

One objection states that the Ezekiel 38-39 passage is in the restoration section of Ezekiel. The answer is that this is true, but which restoration? the partial in unbelief? or the final in faith? It would seem to be the partial one in unbelief. Faith begins in Israel only after this invasion. The chronology of the Book of Ezekiel would hardly be a problem for this view. The restoration in faith is covered by Ezekiel 40-48.

A *second* objection, and the one most commonly used, is that "dwelling safely" or "securely" as used in the Old Testament always refers to millennial peace and security—something that Israel will not receive before the Tribulation. However, this is an overstatement. While it is true that the term "dwell securely" is used of life in the Millennium, this is true only of the minority of cases and not at all true of the majority. A list of references where this is not true includes: Leviticus 25:18, 19; 26:5; Deuteronomy 12:10; I Samuel 12:11; I Kings 4:25; Psalm 4:8; 16:9; Proverbs 1:33; 3:23, 29; Isaiah 47:8; Jeremiah 49:31; and Zephaniah 2:15. The Jeremiah reference is particularly significant since it uses the very same phrases that are found in Ezekiel 38:11. This phrase is used more in non-millennial contexts than in millennial ones.

A *third* objection states that this contradicts the doctrine of imminency. However, stating that something must precede the Tribulation is *not* the same as stating that it must precede the Rapture unless it is further stated that the Rapture begins the Tribulation. However, the act that begins the Tribulation is not the Rapture, but the signing of the seven-year covenant and nothing else. The pretribulation view asserts that the invasion will occur before the signing of the seven-year covenant. This does not destroy any argument of imminency, because the Rapture may still come even before this. This view does not state that this invasion will occur before the Rapture; it only asserts that this invasion will occur before the Tribulation. The Rapture is both imminent and pretribulational. All this means is that the Rapture can occur at any time between now and the signing of the seven-year covenant. It does not mean that the Rapture begins the Tribulation. So then, to say that the invasion takes place before the Tribulation does not negate imminency since it is not the Rapture which begins the Tribulation. Another way of showing this is to use these questions: Could the Rapture have come before 1948? The answer is "yes,"

because the Rapture is imminent. However, could the Tribulation have come before 1948? The answer is "no," because there was no Jewish State and government to sign the covenant which would begin the Tribulation. Believing that Israel had to be established before the Tribulation was never an argument against imminency. Neither is the belief that the invasion comes before the Tribulation an argument against imminency. The author of this book holds to a pretribulation Rapture and believes that the Rapture is imminent. Believing that the Russian invasion also occurs before the Tribulation in no way destroys the argument of imminency for it is *not* the Rapture which begins the Tribulation.

A *fourth* objection states: How could Israel apostatize so soon again after the nation has had a revival? But the real problem is why this should even be a problem. This was often true in Old Testament history. There was speedy apostasy of Israel following the various miracles of the Exodus and the recognition of God at Sinai. There was speedy apostasy after the revivals of Hezekiah and Josiah. There was a speedy apostasy at Nineveh after the city repented under Jonah. This has happened before, and there is no problem with it happening again.

A *fifth* objection states that this event happens *in the latter days and years*. But these terms simply apply to the whole period of the end times when prophecy is again being fulfilled, and so it can very easily apply to the closing days of the Church Age as well. However, this objection is really based on the faulty assumption that this view holds to a pre-Rapture position, which is not true. This is a position of a pretribulation invasion, but not a pre-Rapture invasion.

A *sixth* and final objection states that Israel will not gain any title to the Land nor have the right to return till she signs the covenant with the Antichrist. Building on this statement, those who hold this opinion go on to state that this view would have to say that the covenant is signed before the Rapture. The latter is still based on the confusion as to what this view actually states. It has already been shown that this view does *not* state that the invasion comes before the Rapture. Actually this objection is a little ridiculous. In what possible way could the covenant with the Antichrist give the Jews the right to return that the United Nations did not? Israel already possesses the title of the Land and has possessed it since God made His covenant with Abraham. Furthermore, the United Nations recognized Israel in 1948, and Jews have had the right to return since then. And Jews are returning. Israel's right to return will not be based

on her covenant with the Antichrist any more than it is based on the full recognition by the United Nations. Israel's title to the Land is based on the Abrahamic Covenant. The Scriptures predict a regathering before the Tribulation in unbelief in preparation for judgment. It is God Who is doing the moving, and it is God Who is bringing the Jews back into the Land, and this is enough for Israel's right to the Land. A covenant with the Antichrist will hardly give Israel the right to return. Israel is back in the Land before the Tribulation, and hence, this invasion could take place before the Tribulation.

So from all these facts, this author concludes that the pretribulational view is by far the best view. The Russian invasion is another birth pang that will occur before the Tribulation begins.

E. The One World Government

The next three events leading up to the Tribulation are to be picked up from the previous study of the Times of the Gentiles.[7] These events are all to be found in Daniel 7:23-24:

> *Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be a fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all the kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. And as for the ten horns, out of this kingdom shall ten kings arise: and another shall arise after them; and he shall be diverse from the former, and he shall put down three kings.*

The fifth birth pang leading up to the Tribulation is the development of a one world government (v. 23). The Fourth Gentile Empire was to continue until it eventually devoured the whole world. The Roman Empire is hardly a fulfillment of this prophecy, nor can refuge be sought in stating that Rome conquered all of the then *known* world, for this, too, is untrue. Reasons for this were given in Chapter 2.

Reviewing from the study on the Times of the Gentiles, the Fourth Gentile Empire, the Empire of Imperialism, after the first stage of the Roman Empire, eventually split into an east-west division. The east-west axis is a balance of power. The eastern balance of power is

[7] See Chapter 2, The Times of the Gentiles.

now centered in Russia and the Moslem block of nations, while the western balance of power is with the democracies.

But some day this east-west division will give way to a one world government. In light of Ezekiel 38:1-39:16, the eastern balance of power will collapse with the fall of Russian forces and her Moslem allies in Israel and the destruction of Russia itself. With the eastern power destroyed, this will open the way for a one world government.

As to the exact nature of this government, nothing is stated. It will be a form of imperialism, of course, but whether this will be in the form of the United Nations or the form of a select leadership is unknown. But that this one world government will occur and *devour the whole world* is clear. This will be the fifth birth pang.

F. The Ten Kingdoms

This one world government will eventually split up into ten kingdoms, according to Daniel 7:24a:

> *And as for the ten horns, out of this kingdom shall ten kings arise . . .*

In recent years much speculation has centered on the European Common Market, and more recently, on the European Union (EU). According to the usual scenario portrayed, there is to be a revival of the old Roman Empire composed of a confederacy of ten European states.

Eschatology based on "newspaper exegesis" attempts to prove itself from current events. But the Scriptures do not speak of the Ten Kingdoms in this fashion. Textually, after the world falls under the One World Government, then and only then does the One World Government split up into ten kingdoms. But these ten kingdoms cover the whole world, and not Europe alone. The sixth birth pang will be this division of the One World Empire into ten kingdoms with ten kings who will rule the world. At best, the Common Market or European Union might become one of the ten, but could hardly become all ten.

Beginning before the Tribulation, this Ten Kingdom Stage will continue into the middle of the Tribulation, and it will be the sixth birth pang.

G. The Rise of the Antichrist

Following the division of the world into ten kingdoms, the Antichrist will begin his rise to power in Daniel 7:24b:

> *And another shall arise after them; and he shall be diverse from the former, and he shall put down three kings.*

That there was to be a revelation of the identity of the Antichrist before the Tribulation is clear from II Thessalonians 2:1-3:

> *Now we beseech you, brethren, touching the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him; to the end that ye be not quickly shaken from your mind, nor yet be troubled, either by spirit, or by word, or by epistle as from us, as that the day of the Lord is just at hand; let no man beguile you in any wise: for it will not be, except the falling away come first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, . . .*

In this passage, two events are said to occur before *the day of the Lord*, which always refers to the Tribulation. The *first* is the apostasy which was discussed earlier. The *second* is the revelation of *the man of sin* and *the son of perdition*. This revelation as to the identity of the Antichrist will come before the Tribulation, and it will come at the time after the world has been divided into ten kingdoms. It will be the seventh birth pang.[8]

Exactly how the Antichrist will be identified is not stated. Perhaps it will be determined by the numerical value of his name (to be discussed in Chapter 11) or by some other means. But he will be known. The Antichrist's rise to power before the Tribulation is a biblical necessity. Since the Tribulation begins with the signing of the seven-year covenant between Israel and the Antichrist, it is necessary for the Antichrist to be in sufficient political power to sign such a covenant.

[8] For more details, see Appendix II, II Thessalonians 2:1-12.

H. The Period of Peace and False Security

Another event leading up to Tribulation is found in I Thessalonians 5:1-3:

> *But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that anything be written unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. When they are saying, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction comes upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall in no wise escape.*

Once again, the term *the day of the Lord* is found, which is a reference to the Tribulation. At a time when men are saying, *Peace and safety*, the destruction of the Tribulation suddenly hits with devastating force. This fact will require this period to come just before the act that initiates the Tribulation itself. So while all the world is under the Ten Kingdoms and the Antichrist is rising to power, there will be a period of peace and false security. But this will be shattered by the Tribulation. Once again, the travail motif is found in verse three. This is the eighth birth pang leading up to the Tribulation.

I. The Seven-year Covenant

The ninth event leading up to and beginning the Tribulation is the signing of the seven-year covenant between Israel and the Antichrist. This will be dealt with in Chapter 9, but at this point it should be emphasized that it is *not* the Rapture that begins the Tribulation, but the signing of the seven-year covenant. Keeping this in mind will prevent many misunderstandings concerning the belief in the imminency of the Rapture. It is not the Rapture but the seven-year covenant that will begin the Tribulation.

Summary

These are the nine events leading up to the Tribulation that can be traced in a sequence. There are other events, however, which are also stated to be pretribulational but that cannot at this time be placed in any sequence of events. It is these events that are the concern of the next two chapters.

FIVE

Other Pretribulational Events

While some of the events stated to be pretribulational can be placed in a chronological sequence of events, others cannot be so placed until they occur. One of these is the Rapture, which will be discussed in a later chapter. This chapter will be concerned with other pretribulational events that cannot at this time be placed in any sequential order.

A. Blackout I

During the end time period, including the last days of the Church Age, as well as the Tribulation, the Scriptures speak of five blackouts that will occur. A blackout means that the light of the sun, moon, and stars is suddenly blacked out so that the earth is not receiving any light from these sources and is in total darkness. It will be similar to the blackout of Egypt which took place during one of the ten plagues, as described in Exodus 10:21-23:

> *And Jehovah said unto Moses, Stretch out your hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, even darkness which may be felt. And Moses stretched forth his hand toward heaven; and there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days; they saw not one another, neither rose any one from his place for three days: but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.*

Another example of such a blackout happened during the crucifixion, in Matthew 27:45:

> *Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour.*

The first of these five blackouts is clearly prophesied to occur before the Tribulation in Joel 2:31:

> *The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of Jehovah comes.*

Again, the term *the Day of Jehovah* is used, which is always a name for the Tribulation. The first blackout is to take place beforehand. So at some point before the Tribulation, one of these worldwide blackouts will occur.

B. The Return of Elijah

Another event clearly predicted to occur before the Tribulation is the return of Elijah, in Malachi 4:5-6:

> *Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of Jehovah come. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers; lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.*

Verse five pinpoints the return of Elijah as coming before *the Day of Jehovah,* namely before the Tribulation. Verse six goes on to describe the nature of Elijah's ministry when he returns, that of a Jewish family reunion program. The Jewish family unit, strong for so many centuries, has in these last days begun to break down and, according to the prophetic word, will continue to break down. The ministry of Elijah is to restore this unity in preparation for the Second Coming of the Messiah.

There is a great deal of confusion concerning the relationship of Elijah to John the Baptist. It should be kept in mind that the return of Elijah was never promised before the First Coming of Messiah. Elijah was only promised to come before the Second Coming of Messiah and before the Tribulation itself. However, a forerunner was predicted before the First Coming of Messiah in Malachi 3:1:

> *Behold, I send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant, whom ye desire, behold, he comes, says Jehovah of hosts.*

The coming of a forerunner before the First Coming of Messiah was also predicted in Isaiah 40:3-5:

> *The voice of one that cries, Prepare ye in the wilderness the way of Jehovah; make level in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the uneven shall be made level, and the rough places a plain: and the glory of Jehovah shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of Jehovah has spoken it.*

John the Baptist was clearly the fulfillment of these passages, as stated in Matthew 3:1-6:

> *And in those days comes John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, saying, Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of through Isaiah the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness. Make ye ready the way of the Lord, Make his paths straight. Now John himself had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then went out unto him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region around about the Jordan; and they were baptized of him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.*

Matthew 11:7-10 makes the same point:

> *And as these went their way, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to behold? a reed shaken with the wind? But what went ye out to see? a man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they that wear soft raiment are in king's houses. But wherefore went ye out? to see a prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet. This is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before your face, Who shall prepare your way before you.*

The same is true in John 1:23:

> *He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness. Make straight the way of the Lord, as said Isaiah the prophet.*

But while John the Baptist fulfilled those prophecies concerning the forerunner before the First Coming of Messiah, he was not Elijah who was promised before the Second Coming. This becomes clear when all the relevant passages are taken into account.

One important passage bearing on this question is found in John 1:19-23:

> *And this is the witness of John, when the Jews sent unto him from Jerusalem priests and Levites to ask him, Who are you? And he confessed, and denied not; and he confessed, I am not the Christ. And they asked him, What then? Are you Elijah? And he said, I am not. Are you the prophet? And he answered, No. They said therefore unto him, Who are you? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What say you of yourself? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said Isaiah the prophet.*

In this passage John the Baptist makes it clear that he is not Elijah. He never claimed to be Elijah, and when asked, he denied it. He only claimed to be the fulfillment of the Isaiah prophecy.

The next passage is found in Matthew 17:9-13:

> *And as they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen from the dead. And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elijah must first come? And he answered and said, Elijah indeed comes, and shall restore all things: but I say unto you, that Elijah is come already, and they knew him not, but did unto him whatsoever they would. Even so shall the Son of man also suffer of them. Then understood the disciples that he spoke unto them of John the Baptist.*

In answer to the disciples' question regarding the coming of Elijah, the Messiah first of all states, in the future tense, that Elijah will indeed come to restore all things, which is a strong allusion to his ministry mentioned in Malachi 4:6. But this was a promise in relation to the Second Coming and not the First Coming. Hence, Elijah is yet to come to do the ministry of restoration. The disciples' confusion at this stage was due to the fact that they did not yet understand the twofold coming of the Messiah

and were still expecting Messiah to set up the Kingdom at that time. The parallel passage in Mark 9:9-13 adds the point that if Elijah had come before the First Coming and restored all things, then all the prophecies of the sufferings of the First Coming would remain unfulfilled. Elijah will indeed come *first*, but first before the Second Coming, not before the First Coming. John the Baptist did not accomplish the ministry of restoration Elijah was to accomplish.

But then Messiah adds that in one sense John the Baptist was Elijah. In what sense? Two other passages answer that. The first is in Matthew 11:11-14:

> *Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there has not arisen a greater than John the Baptist: yet he that is but little in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and men of violence take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if ye are willing to receive it, this is Elijah, that is to come.*

To understand what is being said, it should be noted that Messiah is preaching the good news of the Kingdom (vv. 11-12). If Israel would receive *it*, that is, the Kingdom, then John the Baptist would have fulfilled the function of Elijah and would have accomplished the ministry of restoration. But the Kingdom was rejected, and hence, John the Baptist did not fulfill the function of Elijah; thus, Elijah is yet to come to accomplish the work of restoration.

The second passage answering the question as to what way John the Baptist was Elijah is in Luke 1:13-17:

> *But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: because your supplication is heard, and your wife Elisabeth shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. And you shall have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and he shall drink no wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn unto the Lord their God. And he shall go before his face in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to walk in the wisdom of the just; to make*

ready for the Lord a people prepared for him.

In announcing the coming birth of John the Baptist, the angel declares that he will come in the spirit and power of Elijah.

Consolidating what these verses are saying, some time before the Tribulation Elijah the Prophet will return to do his work of restoration. Thus, Elijah will serve as a forerunner of Messiah's Second Coming in the same way John the Baptist was the forerunner of Messiah's First Coming. John was a type of Elijah in that he came in the spirit and power of Elijah. If Israel had accepted the message, then John the Baptist would have accomplished the function of Elijah, which was the work of restoration. However, John the Baptist and the Messiah were both rejected, and so Elijah is yet to come to perform the work of restoration before the Tribulation.

As with the first blackout, it is not possible to pinpoint at this time exactly when Elijah will come before the Tribulation. Therefore, it is impossible to place his coming in any sequence of events.

C. *The Third Temple?*

This is presented with a question mark because the biblical data is not sufficient to date the rebuilding of the Jewish Temple as before the Tribulation with any certainty. The Tribulation Temple is mentioned in four passages of Scripture. The first is found in Daniel 9:27:

> *And he shall make a firm covenant with many for one week: and in the middle of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease; and upon the wing of abominations shall come one that makes desolate; and even unto the full end, and that determined, shall wrath be poured out upon the desolate.*

The second passage is Matthew 24:15:

> *When therefore ye see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let him that reads understand), . . .*

The third passage is found in II Thessalonians 2:3-4:

> *Let no man beguile you in any wise: for it will not be, except the falling away come first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, he that opposes and exalts himself against all that is called God or that is worshipped; so that he sits in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God.*

The fourth passage is found in Revelation 11:1-2:

> *And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and one said, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. And the court which is without the temple leave without, and measure it not; for it has been given unto the nations: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.*

All four passages describe events which occur in relation to the Jewish Temple. In all of them the events described take place in the middle of the Tribulation, the details of which will be discussed in Chapter 11, The Events of the Middle of the Tribulation. The point to be noted for now is that by the time of the middle of the Tribulation period, the Tribulation Temple is standing and functioning, and it has been functioning for at least a little while before the midpoint of the Tribulation. This requires that the Temple be rebuilt some time before the middle of the Tribulation. This allows for only two options. The Temple must be rebuilt either before the Tribulation or during the first half of the Tribulation. It is impossible with this data to dogmatically state when the Temple will be rebuilt more precisely. Hence, the rebuilding of the Temple before the Tribulation can only be stated as a possibility, for it is also possible that the Temple will be rebuilt during the first half of the Tribulation. What these texts do make clear is that the Temple is built and functioning by the time of the middle of the Tribulation.

Once the Temple is rebuilt, the sacrificial system of the Mosaic Law will be reinstituted. However, this Temple receives no sanction from God. This is clear from Isaiah 66:1-6:

> *Thus says Jehovah, Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: what manner of house will ye build unto me? and what place shall be my rest? For all these things had my hand made, and so all these things came to be, says Jehovah:*

> *but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and that trembles at my word. He that kills an ox is as he that slays a man; he that sacrifices a lamb, as he that breaks a dog's neck; he that offers an oblation, as he that offers swine's blood, he that burns frankincense, as he that blesses an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delights in their abominations: I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spoke, they did not hear: but they did that which was evil in my eyes, and chose that wherein I delighted not. Hear the word of Jehovah, ye that tremble at his word: Your brethren that hate you, that cast you out for my name's sake, have said, Let Jehovah be glorified, that we may see your joy; but it is they that shall be put to shame. A voice of tumult from the city, a voice from the temple, a voice of Jehovah that renders recompense to his enemies.*

Isaiah speaks of a house or temple being built for God which He does not sanction. It cannot refer to Solomon's Temple or the Temple built by Zerubbabel, because God did sanction both of them. Nor can it refer to the Millennial Temple. That one will be built by Messiah, and God will certainly sanction it. Therefore, the only temple that this could refer to is the Tribulation Temple. So Isaiah the Prophet foresees the building of a temple that God will not sanction. What God wants Israel to do at this time is to return to Him in faith, not merely to build Him a house. This passage begins with a protest from God, Who makes it clear that no temple built by Israel at this time will be acceptable, for God will not come and reside in this one (v. 1) as He did in the first Temple. What God will require at this time is not a new temple, but faith (v. 2). He will not accept these reinstituted Levitical sacrifices any more than He would accept human sacrifices, swine, or idolatry in the Old Testament (v. 3). The very fact that they will build this temple shows their failure to listen to God's word (v. 4) and come to God by faith in Jesus the Messiah. Then Isaiah has a word of encouragement to those faithful Jews who will not participate in the rebuilding of the Temple (v. 5), but are seeking to do God's will. So there will be a faithful remnant who will not participate in the rebuilding of the Jewish Temple for the Tribulation. Finally, Isaiah states that this new

Temple will only end in judgment (v. 6) and not in forgiveness of sin or acceptable worship.

Two other things should be mentioned in regard to the third Temple. First, the Six Day War set the stage for the fulfillment of this prophecy in 1967, for until that time the Temple Compound was under Arab control. During the Six Day War, the Temple area fell into Jewish control. At the time of this writing there are no efforts being made to rebuild the Temple, in spite of much rumor to the contrary. The Six Day War has at least made possible the rebuilding of the Temple, and this possibility exists for the first time in centuries.

A second thing that should be noted about the Third Temple concerns the Tribe of Levi. The Tribe of Levi was the only tribe permitted by Mosaic Law to take care of the Temple and conduct the sacrificial system. It is interesting to note that while all the other eleven tribes have lost their tribal identity since the records were destroyed in A.D. 70, the Tribe of Levi has not. Unless a Jew is a member of the Tribe of Levi, he is unable to know from which tribe he is a descendant. The Tribe of Levi has kept their identity. Jews having names such as Levi, Levy, Levin, Levine, Leventhal, Levinson, Cohen, and other comparable names are members of the Tribe of Levi. For the purpose of conducting sacrifice, only the Tribe of Levi matters. It is not important to know who the members of the other tribes are, but it is very important to know who the Levites are, and the Tribe of Levi is known.

So in every way, the stage is set for the Temple to be rebuilt, and it is possible that it will be rebuilt before the Tribulation. If it is not, then it will certainly be rebuilt during the first part of the Tribulation; by the middle of the Tribulation the Temple must be built and functioning and been in operation for a little while.

In any question dealing with the rebuilding of the Temple, the question of the Moslem Dome of the Rock enters the picture. The Dome of the Rock is in the Temple area, possibly on the spot of the old Temple site of the previous two Temples. In the opinion of some, the Dome of the Rock will have to be removed at some point. In the opinion of others, there is enough room in the Temple Compound to permit the rebuilding of the Jewish Temple without needing to tear down the Dome of the Rock. A novel theory that has arisen in recent years is that the Arabs might give up trying to get Jerusalem back and will simply move the Dome of the Rock to a better locality. The point that is missed by those who think this

way is that it is not the Dome itself that is holy to Islam, but it is the site itself that is holy. In Moslem tradition the Dome of the Rock is built over the spot where they say Mohammed ascended into Heaven. It is not the building itself that is holy to Islam, but it is the rock that is holy and is commemorated by the building. Thus, it is rather foolish to think that the Arabs would consent to move the Dome of the Rock. Still another novel theory of recent vintage is that the Temple will be rebuilt completely away from the Temple area. This is also based upon a misunderstanding of Jewish law and Jewish thinking. The Jews would not accept a new Jewish State anywhere but in Israel; nor will the Jews accept a new Jewish Temple anywhere but in the Temple Compound. So the Dome of the Rock remains a problem, and there is much speculation concerning it.

On this question of the Dome of the Rock, the Bible is silent. That the Temple will be rebuilt is the clear teaching of Scripture. Only the passing of history will reveal how and where in the Temple area this will come about.

Also relevant to the Tribulation Temple is the fact that two other things have developed in recent years. One group, based in the Jewish Quarter of the Old City, is in the process of making the furnishings for the next Temple. A second group, located in the Moslem Quarter of the Old City, is training *Cohens*, descendants of the Aaronic line, in how to perform the sacrificial rites. So while the Temple itself is not yet being rebuilt, other preparations for the Temple are being made.

This chapter, then, has dealt with two events that will clearly come before the Tribulation, with the possibility of a third event, none of which can be put in a chronological sequence of events. However, there is another event that is stated to be pretribulational, but also cannot be placed in a sequence of events. This is the Rapture of the Church, and it is the topic of the following chapter.

SIX

The Eschatology of the Invisible Church

The invisible or Universal Church is composed of all true believers, whereas the visible church can be composed of both unbelievers and believers. The eschatology of the visible church was discussed in a previous chapter. The eschatology of the invisible Church rightly belongs to the study of pretribulational events.

A. Definition

A definition of what actually constitutes the invisible Church will help to understand exactly who is involved in the Rapture. A clear definition can be deduced from five passages.

First, in Colossians 1:18, the Church is stated to be the Body of the Messiah:

> *And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.*

Second, the composition of this Body, that is, the Church, is given in Ephesians 2:11-16:

> *Wherefore remember, that once ye, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called Circumcision, in the flesh, made by hands; that ye were at that time separate from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of the promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus ye that once were far off are made nigh in the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who made both one, and broke down the middle wall of partition, having abolished*

> *in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; that he might create in himself of the two one new man, so making peace; and might reconcile them both in one body unto God through the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.*

The composition of the Church, the Body of the Messiah, is a combination of Jews and Gentiles united together by faith in Jesus. This passage makes clear that there is no such thing as a Gentile church any more than there is a Jewish one. Until Messiah died, there were only two entities: Israel (Jews) and the Gentiles. But now there is a third entity, the *one new man*, which is defined as *one body*, which is the Church. The Church is not Jewish or Gentile, but Jew-Gentile, comprised of believers from Israel and believers from the Gentiles, united into a new entity: the Church. Yet both retain their ethnic identity. This is true unity without uniformity. Thus, the Gentiles are *fellow-heirs, and fellow-members of the body, and fellow-partakers of the promise of Christ Jesus through the gospel* (Eph. 3:6). The Gentiles are *fellow-partakers*, but not takers-over. A major purpose of the Church Age is a calling out from among the Gentiles by the gospel, according to Acts 15:14:

> *Symeon has rehearsed how first God visited the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.*

According to Romans 11:25-27, this calling out of the Gentiles will continue until the full number of Gentiles that God has ordained for the Church has been reached:

> *For I would not, brethren, have you ignorant of this mystery, lest ye be wise in your own conceits, that a hardening in part has befallen Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in; and so all Israel shall be saved: even as it is written. There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer; He shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: And this is my covenant unto them, When I shall take away their sins.*

So while God is performing a work among the Gentiles, it has a purpose that is not merely Gentile-oriented, but one that is also related to the Jews, and not apart from them. In fact, one of the purposes for Gentile salvation is to provoke the Jews to jealousy so that during the Church Age many Jews may also come to faith in the Messiah Jesus (Rom. 11:11-15). The Gentile

believers are enjoying the spiritual blessings of the Jewish covenants and are grafted into a Jewish olive tree that belongs to Israel (Rom. 11:17-24), *for salvation is from the Jews* (Jn. 4:22). The Church is a body composed of Jewish (natural branches) and Gentile (wild olive branches) members united by faith in the Messiah.

Third, with the Church being the Body of Messiah and that Body being composed of Jewish and Gentile believers, I Corinthians 12:13 explains how one gets into the Body:

> *For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and were all made to drink of one Spirit.*

Entrance into the Body is by Spirit baptism. Every believer is a member of the Body by virtue of having been baptized by the Holy Spirit, a fact that takes place the moment one believes and is saved. Knowing just how one becomes a member of the Body of Messiah helps to determine when the Church began. This, in turn, is important in determining who is involved in the Rapture.

Fourth, by use of the future tense, Acts 1:5 makes clear that Spirit baptism was still future as of Acts one:

> *For John indeed baptized with water; but* ye shall be *baptized in the Holy Spirit not many days hence. (emphasis added)*

The first time the term *church* is used is in Matthew 16:18, and here also the future tense is used: ... *I will build my church.* The Church did not exist in the Old Testament, nor did it exist during the period of gospel history.

Fifth, if Spirit baptism was future to Acts 1:5, the question is: When did it begin? It is generally agreed that Spirit baptism began in Acts two; while this is true, it is impossible to prove this from Acts two because that chapter says nothing about Spirit baptism. Yet, that Spirit baptism did begin in Acts two is clear from Acts 11:15-16:

> *And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them, even as on us at the beginning. And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit.*

In verse 15, when Peter says, *as on us at the beginning*, he is referring to the experience of the Jewish Apostles in Acts two. Then, in verse 16, Peter quotes Acts 1:5 and states that the prophecy of Spirit baptism in 1:5 is what was fulfilled *at the beginning* when the Holy Spirit came upon the Jewish Apostles in Acts two.

So then, the Church is the Body of the Messiah composed of Jewish and Gentile believers and entrance is by Spirit baptism only. Since Spirit baptism did not begin until Pentecost in Acts two, then the Church could not have existed prior to that time. When Jesus spoke of building His Church in Matthew 16:18, He used the future tense, showing that the Church had not yet begun. A major reason was that both the resurrection (Eph. 1:19-20) and the ascension, with the subsequent giving of spiritual gifts (Eph. 4:7-12), were necessary prerequisites for the building of the Church. The Church is composed of all true believers from Pentecost in Acts two until the Rapture of the Church. The Rapture excludes the Old Testament saints. It also excludes the Tribulation saints. The only saints who will be raptured are the Church saints. The Rapture passages clearly state that only those who are *in Christ* will partake of the Rapture. Throughout his writings, Paul uses terms such as *in Christ*, *in Jesus*, *in Jesus Christ*, *in Christ Jesus*, *in Him*, *in Whom*, *in the Lord*, in a very technical way, referring to those who were baptized by the Spirit into the Body of the Messiah, which only began in Acts two.

B. The Rapture of the Church

There are two separate issues concerning the Rapture. The *first* is the Rapture event itself; the *second* deals with the timing of the Rapture.

1. The Events of the Rapture

Three key passages need to be studied for an understanding of the Rapture. The first is found in John 14:1-3:

> *Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again,*

> *and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.*

This passage does not detail the Rapture event, but does contain the promise of it. In these verses, Jesus promised to return for the believers. Nothing is revealed as to the time or the circumstances, only the fact that there is a coming of Jesus for His saints. This coming especially for the saints is the subject of revelation in the two other passages. This passage does make one key point: this coming for the believers was for the purpose of taking them to where He was then going. Since Jesus was then going to Heaven, this is a coming to take the saints to Heaven and not to the earth. This is important because in Posttribulationism the saints meet the Lord in the air and return with Him to the earth. But this is not the promise here. He is coming to take the saints to Heaven. The passage itself says nothing about the timing of the Rapture, only that the result of it is our entry into Heaven. This fits well with Pretribulationism.

The second passage is I Thessalonians 4:13-18, which describes the *program* of the Rapture:

> *But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that fall asleep; that ye sorrow not, even as the rest, who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.*

In verses 13-15, Paul answers a question that has been raised in Thessalonica: Do believers who have died miss out on the benefits of the Rapture? These believers did understand that there was a Rapture to come, but they did not understand how dead saints would be involved in the Rapture. Hence, some were thinking that only living believers

would enjoy the benefits of the Rapture and that the dead believers would not. This question arose because some of the believers had recently died. Their loved ones who were still living were distressed, not knowing what the future had in store for them. Apparently, while Paul had been with them, he had taught some truths concerning the Rapture as it related to the living, but not to the dead. So Paul comforts the bereaved members with the truth that dead believers will not miss out on the benefits of the Rapture; in fact, they will begin to receive the benefits first. In reference to the death of believers, Paul uses the term "sleep." This term, when used as a synonym for death, is used of believers only and never unbelievers. Thus, the Bible views the death of believers as a temporary suspension of physical activity until the believer awakens at the Rapture. Just as physical sleep is temporary (a temporary suspension of physical activity until one awakens, yet there is no suspension of mental activity), so is death: it is a temporary suspension of physical activity until one awakens at the resurrection. This verse does not teach "soul sleeping," for there is no cessation of spirit-soul activity, only physical activity.

Having stated that the dead believers benefit from the Rapture before the living do, in verses 16-17, Paul spells out the chronological sequence of the Rapture event in seven stages to show why this is true. First: *the Lord himself shall descend from heaven.* At some point in the future, Jesus will come out of the Heaven of heavens and descend into the atmospheric heavens.

Second: *with a shout*. The Greek word used is that of a command of a military leader who comes out of his chief commander's tent and issues a command. One day the Chief Commander will come out of His heavenly tent and give *a shout*, a command for the resurrection and the translation to occur.

Third: *with the voice of the archangel*. Angels are often used to put God's plan into motion. Michael the Archangel will be used in the case of the Rapture. The content of what the voice says is not stated. But if known military procedure can be applied to this situation, then this is simply the repetition by the sub-commander of the order (*shout*) of the chief commander. Jesus gives the *shout* or command for the program of the Rapture to begin, and it is Michael's task to set it into motion, so he repeats the command.

Fourth: *with the trump of God*. The sound of the trumpet was used as

a summons either to battle or to worship. With Michael's repetition of the command, the trumpet sounds, and this triggers the Rapture itself. Thus, this trumpet serves as a summons for the plan to get into motion.

Fifth: *the dead in Christ shall rise first*. This is the resurrection. This is why the dead believers will not miss out on the benefits of the Rapture. They will actually begin to enjoy the benefits of the Rapture first. The expression *in Christ* limits the resurrection at the time of the Rapture to those who were baptized by the Holy Spirit into the Body, which only began in Acts two. Thus, this resurrection of dead saints is to be limited to Church saints only. The Old Testament saints will not be resurrected at this time, but at a later point in God's prophetic program.

Sixth: *then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds.* The resurrection of the dead saints is followed by the translation of the living saints. Every believer without exception will be removed from the earth and will be united with the Lord Jesus in the heavens. The living believers will be caught up (raptured) with the dead ones. This is the source of the term *rapture*. The Greek word used here, *harpazo*, means "to be caught up." The English term *rapture* comes from a Latin source which is the Latin equivalent to the Greek term meaning the same thing: "to be caught up."

The seventh step is: *to meet the Lord in the air: so shall we ever be with the Lord.* The final step is the fact that both the resurrected dead believers and translated living believers will both meet the Messiah in the air. Then comes the guarantee that once believers have been united with Him in the air, they will permanently remain with Him and return with Him into Heaven, as already promised in John 14:1-3. This passage also says nothing about the timing of the Rapture, only the chronological sequence in which the Rapture event occurs.

The third passage, in I Corinthians 15:50-58, deals with the *change in the nature of the bodies:*

> *Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I tell you a mystery: We all shall not sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this*

> *corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting? The sting of death is sin; and the power of sin is the law: but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that you labor is not vain in the Lord.*

Verse 50 declares the necessity of the change of the raptured living and dead: *flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither does corruption inherit incorruption.* The background to this statement is found in Genesis 2:17:

> *But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat of it: for in the day that you eat thereof you shall surely die.*

This is further developed in Genesis 3:17-19:

> *And unto Adam he said, Because you have hearkened unto the voice of your wife, and have eaten of the tree, of which I commanded you, saying, You shall not eat of it: cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil shall you eat of it all the days of your life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to you; and you shall eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of your face shall you eat bread, till you return unto the ground; for out of it were you taken: for dust you are, and unto dust shall you return.*

Because of sin, man has become subject to corruption and mortality. All men are seen to be guilty, by imputation, of participating in Adam's sin, according to Romans 5:12-14:

> *Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned: for until the law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there*

> *is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression, who is a figure of him that was to come.*

Mankind is living under the sentence of death, where his physical body is subject to corruption and mortality. The sin nature is in it, and results of sin are evident in the death of the body. This kind of body, subject to sin, mortality, death, and corruption, cannot enter into the Eternal State. So a change will be necessary (resurrection or translation) before the bodies can enter into eternity.

In verses 51-53, the change is described. The emphasis is on the quickness and rapidity of the change. It will be done *in a moment*. The Greek term behind this word is where the modern word "atom" originates. The emphasis is that this will be an "atom" of time. It will be that quick. Furthermore, it will be in the *twinkling of an eye.* This is not a reference to blinking, but rather to a sudden flash of recognition. It is like seeing a person, and then in a sudden flash recognizing who he is. It is this sudden flash of recognition that is meant by this *twinkling of an eye*. This, too, emphasizes the quickness of the change.

The event is said to happen at the time of *the last trump.* Both Midtribulationists and Posttribulationists try to identify this with the seventh trumpet of the Book of Revelation. But this cannot be what is meant by *the last trump*; at the time that I Corinthians was written, John had not written Revelation. The Corinthians would not have had any knowledge of seven trumpets. Yet it is evident from the fact that Paul used the definite article *the* last trump that he expected the Corinthians to know what he was talking about. The only knowledge they would have of trumpets are those spoken of in the Old Testament, especially those of the Feast of Trumpets. *The last trump* refers to the Feast of Trumpets and the Jewish practice of blowing trumpets at this feast each year. During the ceremony there are a series of short trumpet sounds concluding with one long trumpet blast which is called the *tekiah gedolah*, the great trumpet blast. This is what Paul means by *the last trump.* As such, it says nothing concerning the timing of the Rapture; only that the Rapture, whenever it comes, will fulfill the Feast of Trumpets. This trumpet is the same as the *trump of God* found in I Thessalonians 4:16. In that passage, at the sound of the trumpet the dead are raised as incorruptible and *we*, the living, will be changed.

Thus, in verse 53, the problem which keeps the dead body out of Heaven, corruption, will be changed through the resurrection and will become incorruptible. The mortal living will put on immortality through translation.

The nature of this new glorified body is not the subject of much revelation, but there are several things which are said. What is revealed clearly about the resurrection body is found in I Corinthians 15:35-49:

> *But some one will say, How are the dead raised? and with what manner of body do they come? You foolish one, that which you yourself sow is not quickened except it die: and that which you sow, you sow not the body that shall be, but a bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other kind; but God gives it a body even as it pleased him, and to each seed a body of its own. All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one flesh of men, and another flesh of beasts, and another flesh of birds, and another of fishes. There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars for one star differs from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. So also it is written, The first man Adam became a living soul. The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. Howbeit that is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; then that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthly: the second man is of heaven. As is the earthly, such are they also that are earthly: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.*

Six points are made concerning the resurrection body: *first*, it is a body that is incorruptible (v. 42); *second*, it is a glorified body (v. 43). The same point is made by Philippians 3:21:

> *Who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, according to the working whereby he is able even to subject all things unto himself.*

Third, it is a body of resurrection power (v. 43); *fourth*, it is a spiritual body (vv. 44-46); *fifth*, it is a heavenly body (vv. 47-49); and *sixth*, it is also an immortal body (v. 53).

It is possible that information as to the nature of the new body may be gleaned from a study of the nature of the resurrected body of Jesus. But here some caution must be used. This source of information has one major drawback. It is not always easy to determine if what was true of the body of Jesus was due to His resurrection or due to His deity. Thus, some of the following observations concerning His body could possibly be true of all resurrected bodies. But they may not all be true, for some may be true only because of His divinity. We know that His voice was recognized as being the same as the one He had before His death and resurrection (Jn. 20:16). Also, His physical features were recognized, though not always immediately (Jn. 20:26-29; 21:7). It was a very real body of flesh and bone and not a mere phantom body, since it was embraceable (Jn. 20:17, 27). The resurrected Messiah was able to suddenly disappear (Lk. 24:31) and go through walls (Jn. 20:19). It was a body that was able to eat food (Lk. 24:41-43). A number of these factors may be true of all resurrected bodies, but whether all these things will be true cannot be known until the Rapture.

Finally, in I Corinthians 15:54-58 the change from corruption to incorruption and from mortality to immortality results in the final victory over death.

2. The Timing of the Rapture

The next question concerning the Rapture is *when* will it take place? That the Scriptures teach that the Rapture will occur *before* the Tribulation is clear from several lines of evidence.

First: in no biblical passage which discusses the Tribulation is the Church mentioned. The fact that saints are found in the Tribulation does not prove that the Church is there any more than the existence of saints in the Old Testament proves that the Church was there. It

has already been shown that the Church began at Pentecost with the baptizing ministry of the Holy Spirit. Thus, the Old Testament saints are not part of the Church. In the same way, the existence of saints in the Tribulation does not prove that the Church is there either, and not even once are they called the Church. The Church, as such, is never mentioned in any passage dealing with the Tribulation. This is especially evident and significant in the Book of Revelation. The Church is clearly found in chapters 1-3, dealing with the events prior to the Tribulation. Later, the Church is found in chapters 19-22, dealing with events after the Tribulation. But in chapters 6-18, which deal with the Tribulation period itself, the Church is not even mentioned once. This is most unusual in light of the prominence of the Church in the chapters dealing with events prior to and after the Tribulation. Outside the Book of Revelation the fact remains that in no passage dealing with the Tribulation is the Church mentioned. This is only an argument from silence, but within the structure of the Book of Revelation it is a powerful case indeed. From the viewpoint of pure exposition, it is impossible for anyone to turn to a Tribulation passage and to show that the Church is there.

Second: the earliest indication of a pretribulational Rapture is found in Luke 21:34-37:

> *But take heed to yourselves, lest haply your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that day come on you suddenly as a snare: for so shall it come upon all them that dwell on the face of all the earth. But watch ye at every season, making supplication, that ye may prevail to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man. And every day he was teaching in the temple; and every night he went out, and lodged in the mount that is called Olivet.*

After describing the terrible events of the Tribulation, Jesus states that it will come upon all them that dwell on the face of all the earth (v. 35). In other words, no earth-dweller can escape the judgments of the Tribulation. The wording of the passage allows for no exceptions: if one is on the earth, he cannot escape the cataclysms of the Tribulation. Yet there is a way of escaping all these things that shall come to pass (v. 36), but not by

remaining on the earth. In order to be able to prevail to escape all these things one must be a believer. The means of escaping is to *stand before the Son of Man*, a standing that must happen at a place off the earth, for there is no escape on the earth. That is exactly what happens at the Rapture, as already shown from John 14:1-3 and I Thessalonians 4:13-18. Believers are raptured off the earth and stand before the Son of Man.

Third: another specific passage teaching pretribulational deliverance is in I Thessalonians 1:9-10:

> *For they themselves report concerning us what manner of entering in we had unto you; and how ye turned unto God from idols, to serve a living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, who delivers us from the wrath to come.*

The closing words are crucial. The Church at Thessalonica was waiting for the return of Jesus, Who was coming to deliver them from *the wrath to come.* The word *wrath* is used of God's general wrath against sin, as in Romans 1:18, and also of the wrath of the Great Tribulation, as in Revelation 6:17; 14:10, 19; 15:1, 7; 16:1, etc. The wrath of God here is future, and hence, cannot refer to the general wrath of God against sin which is a present reality. This wrath is future. While Hell and the Lake of Fire are also future, they cannot be what this passage is referring to. By virtue of his salvation, the believer is *already* redeemed from Hell. Jesus is not returning for the purpose of delivering the Church from Hell or the Lake of Fire, for this has already been done at the cross. Thus, the wrath that the Church is being delivered from is the wrath of the Great Tribulation. He is coming for the specific purpose of delivering the Church from *the wrath to come*, namely, the Tribulation period. The believer is guaranteed deliverance both from God's general wrath against sin (Rom. 5:9) and from the Tribulation wrath (I Thess. 1:10).

Fourth: another passage dealing with the timing of the Rapture is in I Thessalonians 5:1-10:

> *But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that anything be written unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. When they are saying, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction comes upon them, as tra-*

> *vail upon a woman with child; and they shall in no wise escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief: for ye are all sons of light, and sons of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness; so then let us not sleep, as do the rest, but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that are drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, since we are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for a helmet, the hope of salvation. For God appointed us not unto wrath, but unto the obtaining of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.*

In verse nine, Paul tells the Church in Thessalonica that they have not been appointed to wrath. The antecedent to the word *wrath* is to be found in verse two, which is *the Day of the Lord,* a term that always refers to the Tribulation. Thus, concerning the wrath of God, or the Day of the Lord, or the Tribulation, to *that day* the Church was not appointed. The discussion on the Day of the Lord or the Tribulation immediately follows the discussion of the Rapture in 4:14-18. Thus, the comfort in 4:18 involves the fact that these Church believers will not need to go through the period of the Day of the Lord. Hence, the contrasting *but (peri de)* in 5:1; for as over against the previous comfort, the Day of the Lord is a period of wrath. Verse nine continues to state that the Church, while not having been appointed to wrath, has been appointed to *the obtaining of salvation.* In verse eight, it is referred to as the *hope of salvation.* The salvation spoken of here is future, and so cannot be soteriological, which is a present reality. The salvation here is eschatological, referring to the redemption of the body which will occur at the Rapture. It is this salvation that the Church has been appointed to and not to the wrath of the Day of the Lord. Another point to consider in this passage is found in verses 4-8 where there is a contrast which is aimed to show why the Church, being the children of light, will not need to fear the coming Day of the Lord. The Day of the Lord is referred to as a period of darkness and night (Zeph. 1:14-18; Joel 2:1-2, 10-11). The Day of the Lord, characterized by darkness, will come upon the sons of darkness, that is, the unbelievers. But because the believer is of the day, the Day of the Lord will not come upon him.

Fifth: another key verse dealing with the timing element of the Rapture is in Revelation 3:10:

> *Because you did keep the word of my patience, I also will keep you from the hour of trial, that hour which is to come upon the whole world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.*

In this passage, the Church is promised to be kept from the period of trial that is about to fall upon the whole earth. In the context of the Book of Revelation, it is the Tribulation found in chapters 6-19 that is this period of trial that is to fall upon the whole earth. It is from this period of trial that the Church is to be kept. This verse does not say that the Church will be merely kept safe *during* the trial, but it will be kept *from the very hour* of the trial, that is, from the very *time* of it. This requires a removal before the Tribulation ever occurs. If Revelation 3:10 only means that the Church will be kept safe during the Tribulation, then something goes terribly wrong. Throughout the Tribulation, saints are being killed on a massive scale (Rev. 6:9-11; 11:7; 12:11; 13:7, 15; 14:13; 17:6; 18:24). If these saints are Church saints, they are *not* being kept safe and Revelation 3:10 is meaningless. Only if Church saints and Tribulation saints are kept distinct does the promise of Revelation 3:10 make any sense.

These passages of Scripture all state that the Church will be removed before *the wrath*, or *the Day of the Lord*, or the Tribulation comes. The removal will come by means of the Rapture of the Church. There are a number of other evidences for a Pretribulation Rapture which will be dealt with in another context.

Another question that needs to be discussed is: *When before* the Tribulation does the Rapture take place?

The Scriptures teach that the coming of the Messiah for the believer is imminent, that is, He can come at any time or moment. For instance, in John 21:20-23, it is clear that He could have returned in the days of John the Apostle:

> *Peter, turning about, sees the disciple whom Jesus loved following; who also leaned back on his breast at the supper, and said, Lord, who is he that betrays you? Peter therefore seeing him says to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus says unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to you? follow you me. This say-*

> *ing therefore went forth among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, that he should not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to you?*

In Romans 13:11-12, the redemption of the body is looked upon as being very near:

> *And this, knowing the season, that already it is time for you to awake out of sleep: for now is salvation nearer to us than when we first believed. The night is far spent, and the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.*

The salvation here must again be viewed as eschatological rather than soteriological, for this salvation is viewed as future. As each day ends, it brings the believer one day closer to the time when the Rapture may occur. Because of this imminency, it is time for believers to awaken out of sleep and to live a life consistent with the position of being *sons of light*.

In James 5:7-9, His coming is viewed as being at the door:

> *Be patient therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient over it, until it receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; establish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord is at hand. Murmur not, brethren, one against another, that ye be not judged: behold, the judge stands before the doors.*

The coming of the Lord is *at hand*, and the Judge is *standing before the doors*. His appearance is certainly viewed as imminent.

The closing statements of Jesus in Revelation 22:20 also point to imminency:

> *He who testifies these things says, Yea: I come quickly. Amen: come, Lord Jesus.*

While the earlier passages all clearly taught that the Rapture will precede the Tribulation, these last four passages teach that the Rapture is imminent; He could come at any moment. Only if the Rapture comes before the Tribulation can this be true. In Midtribulationism, the Rapture is always at least 3½ years away. In Posttribulationism it is at least seven years away.

It is never imminent.[1]

So then, concerning the question of *when* does the Rapture occur, two things should be noted. First, the Rapture does come before the Tribulation. Since the Tribulation begins with the signing of the seven-year covenant, the very latest point at which the Rapture can occur would be at the time of the signing of the seven-year covenant. The Rapture will not occur beyond that point.

Second, the Rapture is imminent. It can come at any moment, and it need not wait until the signing of the seven-year covenant. It should be made clear that imminency does not mean "soon." It only means that nothing else must precede it and that it could come at any point of time.

Combining this information, the conclusion is that the Rapture will occur some time between this very moment and the signing of the seven-year covenant. This is referred to as the *Period of the Rapture* on Chart #3.[2] It means that the specific span of time during which the Rapture can occur is any time between right now and the signing of the seven-year covenant. Therefore, the Church may see some more pretribulational events just as it has already seen some. But it may not see any more, depending on exactly at what point the Rapture will occur.

The relationship of the Rapture to the Tribulation must be clearly focused in the mind. The Rapture *precedes* the Tribulation, but it *does not begin* the Tribulation, a fact confused by many Pretribulationists. It is not the Rapture, but the seven-year covenant which begins the Tribulation. The Rapture will merely come some time before this, and may very well precede the Tribulation by a good number of years.

C. *The Judgment Seat of the Messiah*

1. The Judgment

The second major element in the eschatology of the invisible Church

---

1 For an excellent detailed study of imminency, see the work by Renald Showers, *Maranatha: Our Lord, Come!*

2 See page 46.

involves the Judgment Seat of the Messiah, a judgment of the believer's works, not his sins. As already indicated by Luke 21:34-36, the result of the Rapture is *to stand before the Son of Man*. This is a judgment that will take place in Heaven after the Rapture of the Church. Three passages deal with this particular judgment. In the first passage, Romans 14:10-12, Paul simply states the *fact* that such a judgment will take place:

> *But you, why do you judge your brother? or you again, why do you set at nought your brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of God. For it is written, As I live, says the Lord, to me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then each one of us shall give account of himself to God.*

The second passage in II Corinthians 5:10 provides the *basis* of this judgment:

> *For we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether it be good or bad.*

The basis of this judgment will be the believer's works done in the body since he became a believer. It is not the believer's sins which will be judged since this has been settled forever at the cross, and *there is now no condemnation for them that are in Christ Jesus* (Rom. 8:1). This is not a question of the believer's sins, but a matter of reward on the basis of the believer's deeds.

The third and most detailed passage dealing with this judgment is in I Corinthians 3:10-15:

> *According to the grace of God which was given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder I laid a foundation; and another builds thereon. But let each man take heed how he builds thereon. For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. But if any man builds on the foundation gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay, stubble; each man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it is revealed in fire; and the fire itself shall prove each man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work shall abide which he built thereon, he*

> *shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as through fire.*

In verses 10-11, Paul again points out that the basis of the judgment is the works of the believer. This is portrayed as building on a foundation that has already been laid; the judgment is based on *how* one has built on this foundation (Jesus the Messiah). Furthermore, in verse 12, this judgment of works will not be based upon quantity, but upon quality. It will not be a question as to *how much* gold, silver, costly stones or wood, hay, stubble; but *was it* gold, silver, or precious stone, or *was it* wood, hay, or stubble? It is a matter of quality and not of quantity. The concern of this judgment is whether or not the believer followed what God's will was for him. If a believer is doing the will of the Lord, obeys His commandments, and fulfills the ministry for which he received his spiritual gifts, then he is building on the foundation with gold, silver, and precious stones. But where he falls short of these things, he is building with wood, hay, and stubble. While the believer's sins themselves are not brought out in this judgment, they do play an indirect role in this judgment. During the period of time a believer is living in a state of unconfessed sin, he is building with wood, hay, and stubble, and not with gold, silver, and precious stones. Thus, there are severe consequences for a believer to be living in sin, consequences that will last for one thousand years.

In verse 13, the means of testing is said to be fire. When fire is applied to wood, hay, or stubble, it is burned up and only ashes remain. But if fire is applied to gold, silver, or precious stones, these elements are refined and become more pure. Again, the means of testing shows that it is a matter of quality and not quantity. Regardless of how little or how much wood, hay, or stubble there may be, fire will burn it all up. Regardless of how much gold, silver, or precious stones there may be, fire refines them all. So some believers will find all their works burned up, and others will merely see them refined. Finally, in verse 14-15, the results of the judgment are given. In verse 14, those who build with gold, silver, and precious stones will find their works still remaining, but purified after the fire has been applied. Thus, these will receive a reward. In verse 15, Paul states the result of those who have built with wood, hay, and stubble. They will all be burned up. Hence, *he shall suffer loss*. But the loss is merely one of rewards and authority, nothing more. He will

not be punished for his sins any more than a runner in a race is punished for not coming in first. But he does lose out on this reward. Lest anyone conclude that the person loses his salvation, the text in no uncertain terms states, *but he himself shall be saved.* His works do not determine his salvation. His salvation is assured for he trusted the Messiah, and salvation is by grace through faith apart from works. But he will spend the Kingdom period with nothing to show for his spiritual life.

2. The Rewards

This passage says nothing about the nature of the reward, but other passages do. They speak of these rewards as being crowns. The Greek language has two words meaning "crown." One is the word *diadem*, which is a king's crown. It is the crown of a sovereign and of a person who is royal by his nature and by his position—a king. This is the kind of crown that Jesus wears. The second Greek word is *stephanos*, which is a crown given to an overcomer, a victor, one who has won a race. These are the kinds of crowns available to believers because they overcame in the spiritual warfare and are now crowned at the Judgment Seat of the Messiah.

There are five such crowns mentioned in the Scriptures. The first crown is called the *incorruptible crown* in I Corinthians 9:24-25.

> *Know ye not that they that run in a race run all, but one receives the prize? Even so run; that ye may attain. And every man that strives in the games exercises self-control in all things. Now they do it to receive a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.*

This is a crown given to those who exercise self-control and gain the mastery and victory in the spiritual life. It is for those who have gained the victory over the old man, the old sin nature. It is for those who have learned to live a Spirit-controlled life.

In I Thessalonians 2:19, a second crown is called the *crown of rejoicing:*

> *For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of glorying? Are not even ye, before our Lord Jesus at his coming?*

This is the crown given to those who win souls for Jesus the Lord. It is a crown available to all those who do the work of evangelism, and the fruits of their labors are seen in people coming to the Lord through them.

II Timothy 4:7-8 speaks of a third crown, the *crown of righteousness:*

> *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at the day; and not to me only, but also to all them that have loved his appearing.*

This is a crown for those who have kept the faith both doctrinally and morally in spite of adverse circumstances. It is a crown given to those *who love his appearing,* those who look longingly for the return of the Messiah. Looking for His return is the result of sound doctrine and keeping the faith. A life lived in conformity with the New Testament will include the expectation of the soon return of the Lord. For such, there is a *crown of righteousness*.

A fourth crown is called the *crown of life* and is mentioned in two passages. In James 1:12, it is a crown for those who endure trials:

> *Blessed is the man that endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord promised to them that love him.*

In Revelation 2:10, it is given to those who suffer martyrdom for their faith:

> *Fear not the things which you are about to suffer: behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days. Be you faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.*

A fifth and final crown mentioned in the Scriptures is a *crown of glory* in I Peter 5:2-4:

> *Tend the flock of God which is among you, exercising the oversight, not of constraint, but willingly, according to the will of God; nor yet for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as lording it over the charge allotted to you, but making yourselves ensamples to the flock. And when the chief*

> *Shepherd shall be manifested, ye shall receive the crown of glory that fadeth not away.*

This is a crown for faithfully feeding the flock of God. It is available to those pastors, elders and others who feed the sheep with the milk and meat of the Word of God.

There may be other crowns available, but these are the only ones referred to in the Word of God. At least these five are available to those whose works remain, which were built of gold, silver and precious stones.

These rewards of crowns are for the purpose of determining degree of authority in the Messianic Kingdom and not for the Eternal Order. In eternity, all believers will be equal, but not so in the Kingdom where believers may have different positions of authority. In parabolic form, this truth is found in Luke 19:11-27.

D. The Marriage of the Lamb

The third factor in the eschatology of the invisible Church is the Marriage of the Lamb. To fully understand what is involved at the Marriage of the Lamb, one must first understand the background of the Jewish marriage system which was present in that day and which involved four distinct steps.

First, the father of the groom made the arrangements for the marriage and paid the bride price. The timing of the arrangement varied. Sometimes it occurred when both children were small, and at other times it was a year before the marriage itself. Often the bride and groom did not even meet until their wedding day.

The second step, which occurred a year or more after the first step, was the fetching of the bride. The bridegroom would go to the home of the bride in order to bring her to his home. In connection with this step, two other things should be noted. *First*, it was the father of the groom who determined the timing. *Second*, prior to the groom's leaving to fetch the bride, he must already have a place prepared for her as their abode.

This was followed by the third step, the wedding ceremony, to which a few would be invited. Prior to the wedding ceremony, the bride underwent a ritual immersion for ritual cleansing.

The fourth step, the marriage feast, would follow and could last for as many as seven days. Many more people would be invited to the feast than were to the marriage ceremony.

In the Marriage of the Lamb all four of these steps of the Jewish wedding ceremony are evident. First, God the Father made the arrangements for His Son and paid the bride price, which in this case was the blood of the Messiah This is the background for the statement in Ephesians 5:25-27:

> *Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it; that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.*

Just as a long period of time (always at least one year) often transpired between the first and second steps of the Jewish marriage arrangement, this has been the case here. Almost two thousand years have now passed since the first step occurred. But in I Thessalonians 4:13-18, discussed earlier in this chapter, the second step will occur. The Rapture is the fetching of the Bride. Jesus will come in the air in order to fetch His Bride to His home, which is in Heaven. Only God the Father knows the timing of this event (Mat. 24:36). Furthermore, it will only happen once the place of residence has been prepared (Jn. 14:1-3).

In Heaven, the third step will take place. This is the marriage ceremony given in Revelation 19:6-8:

> *And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, saying, Hallelujah: for the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns. Let us rejoice and be exceeding glad, and let us give the glory unto him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife has made herself ready. And it was given unto her that she should array herself in fine linen, bright and pure: for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.*

The marriage ceremony takes place in Heaven and involves the Church. That it must take place after the Judgment Seat of Messiah is evident from

verse eight, for the Bride is viewed as being dressed in white linen, which is *the righteous acts of the saints*. This means that all the wood, hay, and stubble has been burned away and all the gold, silver, and precious stones have been purified. Thus, following the Rapture of the Church in which the Bridegroom brings the Bride with Him to His home, and following the Judgment Seat of Messiah which results in the Bride having the white linen garments, the wedding ceremony takes place. It takes place before the actual Second Coming of Messiah. The Judgment Seat of Messiah corresponds to the Jewish practice of the cleansing of the bride.

In the context of Revelation 19, verses 1-10 describe events in Heaven prior to the Second Coming, while verses 11-21 describe the Second Coming and subsequent events. The thing that should be carefully noted here is that the Church is already in Heaven *before* the Second Coming. Furthermore, the Church has been in Heaven long enough to undergo the Judgment Seat of Messiah. This clearly means that the Rapture and the Second Coming cannot be the same thing, but must be separated by some duration of time. Previously, passages have been cited to show that the Rapture must come before the Tribulation starts. Revelation 19:6-8 is further evidence for this fact.

The marriage ceremony will take place in Heaven after the Rapture and before the Second Coming, involving only the Church saints.

The fourth step, the marriage feast, will take place on earth after the Second Coming, and with the feast the Messianic Kingdom will begin. For that reason, some of Messiah's Kingdom parables were in reference to the marriage feast (Mat. 22:1-14; 25:1-13). Whereas the marriage ceremony involves only the Church, the marriage feast will include the Old Testament saints and the Tribulation saints. The details of the fourth step will be discussed in Chapter 15, The Seventy-Five Day Interval.

This, then, is the eschatology of the invisible Church. The Rapture will occur at some time before the Tribulation. Next will come the Judgment Seat of Messiah and the Marriage Ceremony of the Lamb in Heaven prior to the second advent. Yet there are other events which occur in Heaven just prior to the Tribulation that need to be examined at this point. These will be discussed in the next chapter.

SEVEN

Events in Heaven Prior to the Tribulation

Chapters four and five of the Revelation record events transpiring in Heaven just before the Tribulation. With these chapters, the Revelation begins the third and major section of the book, dealing with *the things which must come to pass hereafter,* that is, after the seven churches. This section comprises chapters 4-22. Chapter four deals with the Throne of God; chapter five speaks of the Lamb and the Seven-Sealed Scroll.

A. The Throne of God—Revelation 4:1-11

Verse one contains an introduction to these two chapters:

> *After these things I saw, and behold, a door opened in heaven, and the first voice that I heard, a voice as of a trumpet speaking with me, one saying, Come up hither, and I will show you the things which must come to pass hereafter.*

Many Premillennialists see the Rapture of the Church in this verse, but this requires somewhat of an allegorical interpretation. Following *The Golden Rule of Interpretation*, this verse merely contains an invitation for John to come to Heaven in vision (v. 2) in order that God can show him *the things which must come to pass hereafter*. John has already described *the things which he saw* (the Glorified Son of Man) and *the things which are* (the seven churches). Now the time has come for John to be shown what must follow the period of the seven churches. The word *hereafter* obviously refers back to 1:19, where the outline of the Revelation was first given. Hence, what follows from chapter four onward covers the events following the time of the seven churches. This itself may indi-

cate a Pretribulation Rapture. The invitation to John is not a symbol of the Rapture, for, as will be shown shortly, the Church is viewed as being already in Heaven. This is merely a personal invitation to John to come to where he can receive the rest of the prophecy involved in the Revelation.

Throughout the book two key phrases will be found. One is *after these things,* and the other is simply *after this*. The first phrase is *chronological*. What is described after this phrase follows chronologically the events found in the previous passage. The connecting link, then, is a chronological one: It introduces events that will chronologically follow those events described in the immediate previous context. The second phrase only refers to the next thing John saw and does not necessarily imply chronology. The next vision John sees may chronologically precede or follow the previous context or he may be describing something contemporary with it.

In verse one, with the phrase *after these things*, John introduces events which will chronologically follow the previous context, namely, the seven churches. The events of Revelation four and five, then, chronologically follow the events of the seven churches.

In verses 2-3, John describes the Throne and the Throne-Sitter:

> *Straight way I was in the Spirit: and behold, there was a throne set in heaven, and one sitting upon the throne; and he that sat was to look upon like a jasper stone and a sardius: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, like an emerald to look upon.*

That John was not physically taken into Heaven, but only saw it in a vision, is clear from the statement, *I was in the Spirit*. The Person sitting on the Throne is God the Father.

Verse four describes the Throne attendants:

> *And round about the throne were four and twenty thrones: and upon the thrones I saw four and twenty elders sitting, arrayed in white garments; and on their heads crowns of gold.*

The identity of these 24 elders has been much debated. Some take it to refer to celestial beings, while others take it to refer to and represent the Church. While the text does not clearly state as to what these 24

elders refer, there are clues in the text by which their identity can be deduced. *First*, these elders are clothed with *white garments*, which throughout the Revelation are symbols of salvation. Celestial beings before the Throne of God did not need salvation, for they were not lost to begin with. But these elders were at one time lost and at some point received salvation, as is seen by their wearing of the white garments. The *second* clue is the fact that they are wearing *crowns*. These crowns are not *diadem* crowns worn by those who are royal by nature, which would have been the case had these been celestial beings. These crowns are the *stephanos* crowns, the crowns of an overcomer, the type of crown given as rewards to the members of the Church at the Judgment Seat of Messiah. A *third* clue lies in their very title of *elders*. Nowhere else in Scripture is the term used to describe celestial or angelic beings. This term is used of humans in positions of authority either in the synagogue or church.

The figure 24 is probably taken from I Chronicles 24, where David divided the Tribe of Levi into 24 courses to represent the whole. Since the Church is a kingdom of priests, these 24 elders represent the Church as a whole. This actually provides a fourth clue to the fact that the 24 elders represent the Church and not angels.

Hence, from these four clues, the 24 elders must represent the Church saints. If this is true, then they provide further evidence for a pretribulational Rapture. The Church is already in Heaven in chapters four and five before the Tribulation begins in chapter six. It fits well in the chronological sequence provided by the Revelation. Chapters two and three viewed the Church on earth with a promise in 3:10 that the Church will be kept from the very time of the Tribulation. In chapter four, the Church is in Heaven, and so the promise of 3:10 has been kept. The fact that these 24 elders are wearing these *stephanos* crowns also shows that the events described in chapters four and five occur *after* the Judgment Seat of Messiah but *before* the Marriage of the Lamb.

The third member of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, is found in verse five:

> *And out of the throne proceed lightnings and voices and thunders. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God; ...*

These seven Spirits of God are representative of seven attributes of the

Holy Spirit described in Isaiah 11:2.

Verses 6-8 describe the four living creatures:

> *And before the throne, as it were a sea of glass like unto crystal; and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, four living creatures full of eyes before and behind. And the first creature was like a lion, and the second creature like a calf, and the third creature had a face as of a man, and the fourth creature was like a flying eagle. And the four living creatures, having each one of them six wings, are full of eyes round about and within; and they have no rest day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come.*

The fact that these creatures are described as having six wings and they cry the triad, *Holy, holy, holy*, would make them the same as the *seraphim* in Isaiah 6:1-3:

> *In the year that king Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and his train filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim: each one had six wings; with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy holy, holy is Jehovah of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.*

The chapter closes in verses 9-11, describing the continuous worship before the Throne:

> *And when the living creatures shall give glory and honor and thanks to him that sits on the throne, to him that lives for ever and ever, the four and twenty elders shall fall down before him that sits on the throne, and shall worship him that lives for ever and ever, and shall cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Worthy are you, our Lord and our God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power: for you did create all things, and because of your will they were, and were created.*

Following the crying of the triad, the 24 elders cast their crowns before the Throne. This need not be taken as a once for all action whereby the saints

who have received their crowns give them up permanently to Messiah. The cry of the chorus is viewed as being continuous. The cry of the triad comes repeatedly, one after the other, and so does the chorus. Verse eight states that the crying of the triad is continuous, and therefore, so is the casting of the crowns. So then, it is not a question of the Church saints giving up the crowns forever, but a continuous removal of the crowns from their heads in worship of God the Father.

B. The Lamb and the Seven-Sealed Scroll—Revelation 5:1-14

Chapter five describes the Lamb and the Seven-Sealed Scroll. It also serves as a prelude to the seven Seal Judgments. All three series of judgments (seals, trumpets, bowls) will be preceded by a prelude in Heaven and the prelude to the Seal Judgments is to be found in chapter five.

The Seven-Sealed Scroll is introduced in verse one:

> *And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the back, close sealed with seven seals.*

It is a scroll (the real meaning of the Greek term translated "book") that is written upon both sides and is sealed with seven seals.

Verses 2-4 describe the problem of the scroll:

> *And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a great voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no one in the heaven, or on the earth, or under the earth, was able to open the book, or to look thereon. And I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open the book, or to look thereon: . . .*

The problem of the Seven-Sealed Scroll was that no one was found worthy to open it. This difficulty, however, is solved in verses 5-7:

> *And one of the elders says unto me, Weep not; behold, the Lion that is of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath overcome to open the book and the seven seals thereof. And I saw in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures,*

> *and in the midst of the elders, a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, having seven horns, and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent forth into all the earth. And he came, and he takes it out of the right hand of him that sat on the throne.*

The Second Person of the Trinity is the One Who is worthy to open the Seven-Sealed Scroll. In verse five, He is referred to as the Lion of Judah, but when John looks, he sees the Lion of Judah as *a Lamb standing* (v. 6). Thus, the two aspects of the two comings of the Messiah are seen. In the First Coming, Messiah came as the Lamb of God Who died for the sins of the world. But in preparation for His Second Coming, He is represented as the Lion ready to pounce. The Lamb is viewed *as though it had been slain.* This phrase is an idiom referring to a resurrected individual. Messiah was killed and by all human experience He should have been dead. But nevertheless, He was very much alive because of His resurrection. Hence the phrase, *as though it had been slain*, is an idiom for a resurrected individual. But with both God the Father and the Holy Spirit present in Heaven, how is it that only Messiah was *worthy* to open the scroll? In this context, to become *worthy* to open the Seven-Sealed Scroll required one to die for sins and then be resurrected. Only the Son was *worthy* in this respect.

Since the Lion-Lamb is the One found worthy to break the seals, chapter five concludes with a description of the worship of the Lamb, in verses 8-14:

> *And when he had taken the book, the four living creatures and the four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having each one a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sing a new song, saying, Worthy are you to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for you were slain, and did purchase unto God with your blood men of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, and made them to be unto our God a kingdom and priests; and they reign upon the earth. And I saw, and I heard a voice of many angels round about the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a great voice, Worthy is the Lamb that has been slain to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and might, and honor, and glory, and*

> *blessing. And every created thing which is in the heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and on the sea, and all things that are in them, heard I saying, Unto him that sits on the throne, and unto the Lamb, be the blessing, and the honor, and the glory, and the dominion, for ever and ever. And the four living creatures said, Amen. And the elders fell down and worshipped.*

Thus, chapters four and five describe events in Heaven preceding the Tribulation. With the opening of the seven seals, the Tribulation judgments begin. It is now time to turn to a study of the Great Tribulation.

Part III

The Great Tribulation

EIGHT

The Great Tribulation: Introduction

The second major division of eschatology concerns the seven-year period commonly designated as the Great Tribulation. Some simply refer to the period as *the Tribulation* and apply the term "Great Tribulation" only to the second half of the seven-year period, the last 3½ years. However, in this study, the term "Great Tribulation" will be used of the entire seven-year period and not just of the latter half. In this introductory chapter, three aspects will be discussed: the names of the Tribulation, its purposes, and the general descriptions of it given in various parts of Scripture.

A. Names

In the Old Testament, the most common name for the Great Tribulation is *the Day of Jehovah* or *the Day of the Lord* found in various passages. Every reference will be dealt with at some point in this study. There are some who use the Day of the Lord to include the Millennium as well as the Tribulation period, based upon II Peter 3:10. But as will be shown later in this chapter, this verse is best seen as applying to the Tribulation only, rather than including the events following it. In *every* passage of the Scriptures that the term *the Day of Jehovah* or *the Day of the Lord* is found, it is always and without exception a reference to the Tribulation period. This is the most common name for this period in the Old Testament, and it is also found in various passages of the New Testament. While the phrase *that day* is used both negatively and positively and therefore many times it does apply to the Millennium, the phrase *Day of Jehovah* or *Day of the Lord* is always used negatively and never included the Millennial Kingdom.

But there are a number of other names or designations for this time

period found in the Old Testament. Following the translation found in the American Standard Version of the 1901 edition, these names include:

The Time of Jacob's Trouble—Jeremiah 30:7
The Seventieth Week (a seven) of Daniel—Daniel 9:27
Jehovah's Strange Work—Isaiah 28:21
Jehovah's Strange Act—Isaiah 28:21
The Day of Israel's Calamity—Deuteronomy 32:35; Obadiah 12-14
The Tribulation—Deuteronomy 4:30
The Indignation—Isaiah 26:20; Daniel 11:36
The Overflowing Scourge—Isaiah 28:15, 18
The Day of Vengeance—Isaiah 34:8; 35:4; 61:2
The Year of Recompense—Isaiah 34:8
The Time of Trouble—Daniel 12:1; Zephaniah 1:15
The Day of Wrath—Zephaniah 1:15
The Day of Distress—Zephaniah 1:15
The Day of Wasteness—Zephaniah 1:15
The Day of Desolation—Zephaniah 1:15
The Day of Darkness—Zephaniah 1:15; Amos 5:18, 20; Joel 2:2
The Day of Gloominess—Zephaniah 1:15; Joel 2:2
The Day of Clouds—Zephaniah 1:15; Joel 2:2
The Day of Thick Darkness—Zephaniah 1:15; Joel 2:2
The Day of the Trumpet—Zephaniah 1:16
The Day of Alarm—Zephaniah 1:16

The New Testament names and designations include:

The Day of the Lord—I Thessalonians 5:2
The Wrath of God—Revelation 15:1, 7; 14:10, 19; 16:1
The Hour of Trial—Revelation 3:10
The Great Day of the Wrath of the Lamb of God—Revelation 6:16-17
The Wrath to Come—I Thessalonians 1:10
The Wrath—I Thessalonians 5:9; Revelation 11:18
The Great Tribulation—Matthew 24:21; Revelation 2:22; 7:14
The Tribulation—Matthew 24:29
The Hour of Judgment—Revelation 14:7

B. Purposes of the Tribulation

There are three main purposes for the Great Tribulation.

1. To Make an End of Wickedness and Wicked Ones

The first of these purposes is to make an end of wickedness and wicked ones. There are two key passages that express this purpose. The first is found in Isaiah 13:9:

> *Behold, the day of Jehovah comes, cruel, with wrath and fierce anger; to make the land a desolation, and to destroy the sinners thereof out of it.*

This passage uses the term *the Day of Jehovah* as a reference to the Great Tribulation and gives its goal in the phrase, *to destroy the sinners thereof out of it*. The purpose, then, is to destroy *wicked ones* out of the land. This is further described in Isaiah 24:19-20:

> *The earth is utterly broken, the earth is rent asunder, the earth is shaken violently. The earth shall stagger like a drunken man, and shall sway to and fro like a hammock; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it, and it shall fall, and not rise again.*

The closing words of this verse state that the basic reason for the judgments of the Tribulation is that the transgression worldwide shall fall and not rise again. Its purpose is to make an end of *wickedness*.

2. To Bring About a Worldwide Revival

The second purpose of the Tribulation is to bring about a worldwide revival. This purpose is given and fulfilled in Revelation 7:1-17. In verses 1-8, John describes the *means* by which God will bring about this worldwide revival, while verses 9-17 portray the *results* of the revival. Revelation seven will be examined from a different perspective in chapter ten of this book, but certain things should be mentioned at this time.

Revelation 7:1-4 reads:

> *After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that no wind*

> *should blow on the earth, or on the sea, or upon any tree. And I saw another angel ascend from the sunrising, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a great voice to the four angels to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we shall have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads. And I heard the number of them that were sealed, a hundred and forty and four thousand, sealed out of every tribe of the children of Israel.*

Verses 5-8 proceed to state that 12,000 Jews are selected from each of the Twelve Tribes, adding up to a total of 144,000 Jews. It is by means of these Jewish evangelists that God will bring about the worldwide revival and accomplish another goal of the Tribulation.

Looking at this from a human viewpoint, there is a decided advantage in using Jews to conduct a worldwide revival in the short time period of 3½ years, for, as will be demonstrated later, this revival will occur during the first half of the Tribulation. In the present system of training missionaries for the work of evangelism in a foreign field, the missionary must first study the Scriptures in a Bible school or in a seminary program, either of which takes three to four years. But while the Bible school or seminary graduate may be prepared to teach the Word of God in his own nation, he is still not prepared to minister in a foreign field. The next two years or so must be spent in language study, for he must learn the language of another country in order to communicate the Word there. The modern missionary, then, must spend approximately six years in preparation before he is fully equipped to present the gospel in a language that is not his own. However, because this revival will be conducted in 3½ years during the first half of the Tribulation, there is not that much time for training. This is where there is a decided advantage in using Jewish people.

First of all, the Jews are scattered all over the world. All of this world's major languages, and a great number of the world's minor languages, are spoken by some Jews somewhere. Except for American Jewry, most Jews are at least bilingual. The author is bilingual, and the author's parents are multi-lingual, speaking five languages each.

Second, with a large segment of American Jewry being the exception, most Jews receive a good and basic understanding of the Old Testament text. They have a greater or lesser degree of knowledge of the Old Testament Scriptures, depending on their background.

Hence, at some time after the Rapture of the Church, the Lord will save 144,000 Jews from the Twelve Tribes and from around the world. These Jews will already speak the languages needed. They will already have a basic knowledge of the Old Testament text. All they will need will be a little time spent in learning the content of the New Testament. So, they could begin to preach the gospel in a very short period of time.

During the first half of the Tribulation, God will evangelize the world by means of the 144,000 Jews and thus fulfill the prophecy found in Matthew 24:14:

> *And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony unto all the nations; and then shall the end come.*

Following the vision of the 144,000 Jews in the first part of Revelation seven, John saw the results of the ministry of these Jewish evangelists in verses 9-17:

> *After these things I saw, and behold, a great multitude, which no man could number, out of every nation and of all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, arrayed in white robes, and palms in their hands; and they cry with a great voice, saying, Salvation unto our God who sits on the throne, and unto the Lamb. . . . And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, These that are arrayed in the white robes, who are they, and whence came they? And I say unto him, My lord, you know. And he said to me, These are they that come out of the great tribulation, and they washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.* (vv. 9-10, 13-14).

After the vision of the 144,000 Jews, John saw myriads and myriads of Gentiles, as well as other Jews who have come to a saving knowledge of the Savior during the Tribulation. The connecting link, *after these things,* is chronological and also shows a cause and effect relationship between the first and the second parts of Revelation seven. Thus, by means of the 144,000 Jews, God will accomplish the second purpose of the Great Tribulation, that of bringing about a worldwide revival.

3. To Break the Power of the Holy People

The third purpose of the Tribulation is to break the power or the stubborn will of the Jewish nation. In Daniel 11-12, the prophet was given a vision of what conditions will be like for his people (Israel) during the Tribulation. Then, in Daniel 12:5-7, a question is raised as to how long this period will be allowed to continue:

> *Then, I, Daniel, looked, and, behold, there stood other two, the one on the brink of the river on this side, and the other on the brink of the river on that side. And one said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, How long shall it be to the end of these wonders? And I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swore by him that lives for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and a half;* ***and when they have made an end of breaking in pieces the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.***(emphasis added)

This passage provides a third goal of the Tribulation. It is to break the power or the stubborn will of the Jewish nation. The Tribulation will continue and will not end until this happens. So from this, the third purpose of the Tribulation can be deduced: God intends to break the power of the holy people in order to bring about a national regeneration.

The means by which God will perform this is given in Ezekiel 20:33-38:

> *As I live, says the Lord Jehovah, surely with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out, will I be king over you. And I will bring you out from the peoples, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out; and I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there will I enter into judgment with you face to face. Like as I entered into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I enter into judgment with you, says the Lord Jehovah. And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the*

> *bond of the covenant; and I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me; I will bring them forth out of the land where they sojourn, but they shall not enter into the land of Israel: and ye shall know that I am Jehovah.*

In this passage, Ezekiel draws a simile with the Exodus, which was examined earlier, in Chapter 4, The Sequence of Pretribulational Events. What is important to note here is that after God gathers the Jews from around the world, He will enter into a period of judgment (the Tribulation) with them. The rebels among the Jewish people will be purged out by this judgment. Only then will the whole new nation, a regenerate nation, be allowed to enter the Promised Land under King Messiah.

C. General Descriptions

Numerous passages of the Old Testament describe the nature and times of the Great Tribulation, and they can not all be dealt with in the scope of this study. But there are key passages that need to be considered in this introductory material on the Tribulation.

1. The Little Apocalypse of Isaiah

An important passage pertaining to the Tribulation is Isaiah 24:1-27:13. This section has some strong similarities with the Revelation, and so it has been called the Little Apocalypse of Isaiah. Verses 24:1-13 depict the earth in utter desolation because of the judgments of the Tribulation:

> *Behold, Jehovah makes the earth empty, and makes it waste, and turns it upside down, and scatters abroad the inhabitants thereof. And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the creditor, so with the debtor; as with the taker of interest, so with the giver of interest to him. The earth shall be utterly emptied, and utterly laid waste; for Jehovah has spoken this word. The earth mourns and fades away, the world languishes and fades away, the lofty people*

> *of the earth do languish. The earth also is polluted under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore has the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are found guilty: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left. The new wine mourns, the vine languishes, all the merryhearted do sigh. The mirth of tabrets ceases, the noise of them that rejoice ends, the joy of the harp ceases. They shall not drink wine with a song; strong drink shall be bitter to them that drink it. The waste city is broken down; every house is shut up, that no man may come in. There is crying in the streets because of the wine, all joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone. In the city is left desolation, and the gate is smitten with destruction. For thus shall it be in the midst of the earth among the peoples, as the shaking of an olive-tree, as the gleanings when the vintage is done.*

In verses 19-20, the earth is pictured as staggering from the judgments of the Tribulation which have fallen upon it because of sin:

> *The earth is utterly broken, the earth is rent asunder, the earth is shaken violently. The earth shall stagger like a drunken man, and shall sway to and fro like a hammock; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it, and it shall fall, and not rise again.*

Yet the judgments are a necessary corollary to God's righteousness, and this is recognized by the righteous ones living at the time, according to Isaiah 26:8-10:

> *Yea, in the way of your judgments, O Jehovah, have we waited for you; to your name, even to your memorial name, is the desire of our soul. With my soul have I desired you in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek you earnestly: for when your judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness. Let favor be showed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness; in the land of uprightness will he deal wrongfully, and will not behold the majesty of Jehovah.*

Isaiah 26:20-21 states that the righteous ones are specially protected

by God as the judgments are poured out against all unrighteousness:

> *Come, my people, enter you into your chambers, and shut your doors about you: hide yourself for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, Jehovah comes forth out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.*

Indeed, this section of Isaiah is the backdrop filling in and clarifying much that is said in Revelation.

2. The Day of Jehovah Passages

The term *the Day of Jehovah* is the most common term in the Old Testament for the Tribulation. It is a period of time that begins with the signing of the Seven-Year Covenant and ends with the Second Coming of Messiah exactly seven years later. Some teach that the Day of Jehovah starts with the Rapture itself, assuming it is the Rapture that begins the Tribulation. But because there could easily be a period of time between the Rapture and the start of the Tribulation, it is better to view the Day of Jehovah as starting with the Seven-Year Covenant. Others wish to extend the period of the Day of Jehovah to include the Millennium and the Aftermath, but a study of the term in every passage will show that it is never used in any context except that of the Tribulation. While other expressions, such as *that day* or *in that day,* are used for both the Tribulation and the Millennium, the term *the Day of Jehovah,* is never used for anything outside of the Great Tribulation.

Several Day of Jehovah passages refer to Israel during the Tribulation, and these will be taken into consideration in Chapter 13, The Great Tribulation: Added Features and Facts. Here, only those Day of Jehovah passages that deal with the world in general, or relate to a specific Gentile nation, will be noted. There are seven such passages.

First, Isaiah 2:12-22 emphasizes the terror of Jehovah that will be manifested at that time:

> *For there shall be a day of Jehovah of hosts upon all that is proud and haughty, and upon all that is lifted up; and it shall be brought low: and upon all the cedars of Lebanon, that are high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan,*

> *and upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills that are lifted up, and upon every lofty tower, and upon every fortified wall, and upon all the ships of Tarshish, and upon all pleasant imagery. And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be brought low; and Jehovah alone shall be exalted in that day. And the idols shall utterly pass away. And men shall go into the caves of the rocks, and into the holes of the earth, from before the terror of Jehovah, and from the glory of his majesty, when he arises to shake mightily the earth. In that day men shall cast away their idols of silver, and their idols of gold, which have been made for them to worship, to the moles and to the bats; to go into the caverns of the rocks, and into the clefts of the ragged rocks, from before the terror of Jehovah, and from the glory of his majesty, when he arises to shake mightily the earth. Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils; for wherein is he to be accounted of?*

Second, Isaiah 13:6-16 elaborates on the first purpose of the Tribulation, to make an end of wickedness and wicked ones:

> *Wail ye; for the day of Jehovah is at hand; as destruction from the Almighty shall it come. Therefore shall all hands be feeble, and every heart of man shall melt: and they shall be dismayed; pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them; they shall be in pain as a woman in travail: they shall look in amazement one at another; their faces shall be faces of flame. Behold, the day of Jehovah comes, cruel, with wrath and fierce anger; to make the land a desolation, and to destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light; the sun shall be darkened in its going forth, and the moon shall not cause its light to shine. And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. I will make a man more rare than fine gold, even a man than the pure gold of Ophir. Therefore I will make the heavens to tremble, and the earth shall be shaken out of its place, in the wrath of Jehovah of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger. And it shall come to pass, that as the chased roe, and as sheep that no man gathers, they shall turn every*

> *man to his own people, and shall flee every man to his own land. Every one that is found shall be thrust through; and every one that is taken shall fall by the sword. Their infants also shall be dashed in pieces before their eyes; their houses shall be rifled, and their wives ravished.*

Third, Ezekiel 30:1-9 describes the effects of the Day of Jehovah on the Middle East nations, particularly on Egypt:

> *The word of Jehovah came again unto me, saying, Son of man, prophesy, and say, Thus says the Lord Jehovah: Wail ye, Alas for the day! For the day is near, even the day of Jehovah is near; it shall be a day of clouds, a time of the nations. And a sword shall come upon Egypt, and anguish shall be in Ethiopia, when the slain shall fall in Egypt; and they shall take away her multitude, and her foundations shall be broken down. Ethiopia, and Put, and Lud, and all the mingled people, and Cub, and the children of the land that is in league, shall fall with them by the sword. Thus says Jehovah: They also that uphold Egypt shall fall; and the pride of her power shall come down: from the tower of Seveneh shall they fall in it by the sword, says the Lord Jehovah. And they shall be desolate in the midst of the countries that are desolate; and her cities shall be in the midst of the cities that are wasted. And they shall know that I am Jehovah, when I have set a fire in Egypt, and all her helpers are destroyed. In that day shall messengers go forth from before me in ships to make the careless Ethiopians afraid; and there shall be anguish upon them, as in the day of Egypt; for, lo, it comes.*

Fourth, Joel 1:15-20 stresses how the Day of Jehovah will affect the crops of the earth:

> *Alas for the day! for the day of Jehovah is at hand, and as destruction from the Almighty shall it come. Is not the food cut off before our eyes, yea, joy and gladness from the house of our God? The seeds rot under their clods; the garners are laid desolate, the barns are broken down; for the grain is withered. How do the beasts groan! the herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture; yea, the flocks of sheep are made desolate. O Jehovah, to you do I cry; for the fire has devoured the pastures of the wilderness, and the flame*

> *has burned all the trees of the field. Yea, the beasts of the field pant unto you; for the water brooks are dried up, and the fire has devoured the pastures of the wilderness.*

Fifth, Obadiah 10-20 describes the effects on the land of Edom, present-day southern Jordan:

> *For the violence done to your brother Jacob, shame shall cover you, and you shall be cut off for ever. In the day that you stood on the other side, in the day that strangers carried away his substance, and foreigners entered into his gates, and cast lots upon Jerusalem, even you were as one of them. But look not you on the day of your brother in the day of his disaster, and rejoice not over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction; neither speak proudly in the day of distress. Enter not into the gate of my people in the day of their calamity; yea, look not you on their affliction in the day of their calamity, neither lay ye hands on their substance in the day of their calamity. And stand you not in the cross-way, to cut off those of his that escape; and deliver not up those of his that remain in the day of distress. For the day of Jehovah is near upon all the nations: as you have done, it shall be done unto you; your dealing shall return upon your own head. For as ye have drunk upon my holy mountain, so shall all the nations drink continually; yea, they shall drink, and swallow down, and shall be as though they had not been. But in mount Zion there shall be those that escape, and it shall be holy; and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions. And the house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau for stubble, and they shall burn among them, and devour them; and there shall not be any remaining to the house of Esau; for Jehovah has spoken it. And they of the South shall possess the mount of Esau, and they of the lowland the Philistines; and they shall possess the field of Ephraim, and the field of Samaria; and Benjamin shall possess Gilead. And the captives of this host of the children of Israel, that are among the Canaanites, shall possess even unto Zarephath; and the captives of Jerusalem, that are in Sepharad, shall possess the cities of the South.*

The Day of Jehovah will be particularly heavy on Edom because of their special mistreatment of Israel. Though other nations are equally guilty, Edom has a unique shame due to its blood relationship to Israel.

Sixth, Zephaniah 1:14-18 portrays the Day of Jehovah as a time of darkness and distress, and also refers to the first purpose of the Tribulation:

> *The great day of Jehovah is near, it is near and hastens greatly, even the voice of the day of Jehovah; the mighty man cries there bitterly. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of the trumpet and alarm, against the fortified cities, and against the high battlements. And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against Jehovah; and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as dung. Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of Jehovah's wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy: for he will make an end, yea, a terrible end, of all them that dwell in the land.*

Seventh, in II Peter 3:10-12, the Day of Jehovah is described as a time of burning for the earth:

> *But the day of the Lord will come as a thief; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing that these things are thus all to be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy living and godliness, looking for and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God, by reason of which the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?*

The process by which the earth will be burned is by the fiery judgments contained in the Seal, Trumpet and Bowl Judgments that will be discussed in Chapter 10, The Events of the First Half of the Tribulation, and Chapter 12, The Events of the Second Half of the Tribulation.

In summary, then, the Scriptures give some general descriptions of the Great Tribulation as a time of darkness, torment, anguish, turmoil, confusion, death, and massive destruction, especially by fire.

NINE

The Beginning of the Tribulation

It has been emphasized in several places that it is *not* the Rapture that begins the Tribulation, but the signing of the Seven-Year Covenant between the Antichrist and Israel. Two key passages bear this out.

A. Daniel 9:24-27

The first 23 verses of Daniel 9 provide the introduction to the Seventy Sevens prophecy found in verses 24-27. The background is given in verses 1-2, where Daniel states that he had been studying the Book of Jeremiah as well as some other prophets, such as Isaiah. He knew from the study of these prophets that the Babylonian Captivity was to be seventy years. He also knew that the seventy years were nearly up. That much of the prophecy he clearly understood. What he misunderstood about the prophecies of Jeremiah, Isaiah, and perhaps others was that he thought the Messianic or Millennial Kingdom would be set up following the seventy years of captivity. He also knew from these prophets that the prerequisite for the setting up of the Kingdom would be Israel's confession of her sins. Assuming that the Babylonian Captivity would be immediately followed by the Kingdom, Daniel prayed a prayer of confession for Israel's sins in verses 3-19.

In verses 20-23, the angel Gabriel was sent to correct Daniel's misunderstanding about the Kingdom's being set up at the end of the seventy years of captivity. Gabriel came to reveal to Daniel the program of God, which would bring in the Kingdom. In a play upon words, he informed Daniel that it was not going to be seventy years, but seventy sevens of years before the Kingdom would be established.

1. The Decree of the Seventy Sevens—Daniel 9:24a

> *Seventy weeks are decreed upon your people and upon your holy city, . . .*

One of the greatest tragedies in biblical interpretation is that the word has been translated here as *weeks*. This would require the Hebrew word *shavuot*. But the word used here is *shavuim* which does not mean *weeks*, but simply means "sevens." As such, it could refer to "seven" of anything, just as the English word "dozen" simply means "twelve" and can be twelve of anything. A dozen is a quantity of twelve, such as a dozen apples or a dozen eggs, and the context must be studied to determine the content. The same thing is true with this Hebrew word; it simply means "seven" and can refer to seven of anything. In this context, obviously, it must be a seven of years, because Daniel has been dealing with years. He has been counting up the seventy years of the Babylonian Captivity, assuming that after seventy years the Kingdom was going to be set up. Clearly, Daniel has been thinking in terms of years. In the Hebrew text there is a play upon words. Daniel is told that it is not "seventy years" but that "seventy sevens of years" must pass before the introduction of the Kingdom. In this passage, then, it means seventy sevens of years, for a total of 490 years. The angel is telling Daniel that a 490-year period has been decreed.

The Hebrew word for *decreed* means "to cut off" or "to determine." Throughout his book, Daniel has been dealing with the theme of the Times of the Gentiles, the lengthy period that began with Nebuchadnezzar's destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. and will end with the close of the Tribulation and the Second Coming of the Messiah. Daniel was the prophet who was given lengthy and detailed revelation concerning the nature of the Times of the Gentiles. It was Daniel who revealed that there would be four Gentile empires over the history of the Times of the Gentiles. In the Seventy Sevens passage, Daniel is told that a period of 490 years is *decreed* or being cut out of the Times of the Gentiles to bring about the final restoration of Israel.

One final note regarding this verse concerns the center of the program of the Seventy Sevens which is *decreed upon your people* [Daniel's people, the Jewish people] *and upon your holy city* [Jerusalem]. The center of the program of the Seventy Sevens is, specifically, the Jewish people and the Jewish city of Jerusalem. A very important thing that must be noted is

that the program of the Seventy Sevens does not concern the Church. It has nothing to do with God's plan and program for the Church. Rather, the Seventy Sevens program concerns Israel.

2. The Purpose of the Seventy Sevens—Daniel 9:24b

> *Seventy weeks are decreed upon your people and upon your holy city, to finish transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy.*

The second part of verse 24 states the purpose of the Seventy Sevens. The purpose of this 490-year period that God has decreed upon the Jewish people is for the accomplishment of six things. The first three things are negative, undesirable elements, which are going to be removed during the program of the Seventy Sevens. The second three things are positive, desirable elements, which are to be effected during the program of the Seventy Sevens. Indeed, the three positive elements are responses to the three negative elements. For example, the first negative element is responded to by the first positive element; purposes one and four go together. The second negative element is responded to by the second positive element; purposes two and five go together. Finally, the third negative element is responded to by the third positive element; purposes three and six go together, as well.

a. To Finish the Transgression

The *first* purpose is: *to finish transgression.* The word *to finish* is a Hebrew word that means "to restrain firmly," "to restrain completely," "to bring to completion." The word *transgression* is a very strong word for "sin." It is a word that literally means "to rebel." In the Hebrew text, it has a definite article. It is not merely to finish transgression, but to finish **the** transgression, to finish **the** rebellion. It refers to one specific act of rebellion, one specific act of transgression, to bring it to a finish, to bring it to completion. The one specific transgression in this context is the rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus. The finishing of this one transgression is seen

in Isaiah 53:1-9 and Zechariah 12:10-13:1.

In this first purpose, sin is to come under control so that it will no longer flourish, specifically, Israel's sin of the rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus. Israel's national sin is now to be firmly restrained, to be brought to completion. The same point is brought out in Isaiah 59:20 and Romans 11:26. The first purpose, then, is to bring to an end Israel's national transgression: the rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus.

b. To Make an End of Sins

The *second* purpose is: *to make an end of sins.* The Hebrew word translated *to make an end* means "to seal up" or "to shut up in a prison house," "to be securely kept," "to be locked up," "to be prevented from roaming at random." The Hebrew word for *sins* means "to miss the mark" and refers to sins in daily life. Sins, then, would be put to an end or taken away.

It is known, of course, that there will be sins in the Kingdom. The point in this passage is that while there may be sin among the Gentile nations, in the Kingdom there will be no sin in Israel. This very same truth is taught in Isaiah 27:9; Ezekiel 36:25-27; 37:23; and Romans 11:27. This is also the point of the New Covenant in Jeremiah 31:31-34, where Jeremiah clearly predicts the day will come when all Israel's sins will be removed and all Israel will be saved, from the least to the greatest. It will not be necessary in the Kingdom for one Jew to say to another Jew, "Know the Lord," for they will all know Him, from the least to the greatest.

The second purpose of the Seventy Sevens is to bring an end to sins in general in daily living in the nation of Israel. On one hand, He will deal with the one specific transgression, the rejection of His Messiahship; on the other hand, sinning daily in Israel will also cease.

c. To Make Reconciliation for Iniquity

The *third* purpose of the Seventy Sevens is: *to make reconciliation for iniquity.* The Hebrew word for *reconciliation* is a word that means "to make an atonement." This is the means by which the first and second purposes will be accomplished. The means by which Israel's national sin of rejecting

the Messiah will be removed and the means by which her daily sins will be removed is by an atonement.

The third purpose is to make an atonement specifically *for iniquity*. The word *iniquity* refers to the sin nature. The program of the Seventy Sevens is a cleansing of Israel that will include the removal of all three things: first, the national sin of rejecting His Messiahship; second, sinning daily; and third, dealing with the sin nature itself.

d. To Bring In an Age of Righteousness

The *fourth* purpose of the Seventy Sevens is: *to bring in everlasting righteousness* or more literally, "to bring in an age of righteousness," which is what the Hebrew word for *everlasting* really means. This age of righteousness is called the Messianic Kingdom and the Millennium. This is the same point made by Isaiah 1:26; 11:2-5; 32:17; Jeremiah 23:5-6; and 33:15-18.

The fourth purpose is to bring in an age of righteousness, to establish the Kingdom. Daniel thought the Kingdom would be set up immediately after the seventy years of captivity; now he is told that this will occur not after seventy years, but after seventy sevens of years or 490 years.

e. To Cause a Cessation of Prophecy

The *fifth* purpose of the Seventy Sevens is: *to seal up vision and prophecy.* The Hebrew word for *seal up* means "to seal up" or "to shut up." It means "to cause a cessation," "to bring completely to fulfillment." The word *vision* refers to oral prophecy, prophecy made only orally like those of Elijah and Elisha. The word *prophecy* refers to prophecy found in written form in the writing prophets such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and in the twelve Minor Prophets. The fifth purpose of the Seventy Sevens is to cause a cessation of both oral and written prophecy, because the program of the Seventy Sevens will contain the final fulfillment of all prophecies; the function of all prophecies will cease at the Second Coming of the Messiah.

Because he is dealing with the Messianic Kingdom, another question is: How is it that the Messianic Kingdom will fulfill all prophecies, since there are things concerning the time beyond the Kingdom, the Eternal State?

The thing to remember, however, is that the Eternal State is New Testament revelation; no Old Testament prophet ever saw beyond the Kingdom into the Eternal Order. From the perspective of the Old Testament and in light of the fact that no prophet ever saw beyond the Messianic Kingdom, when Daniel speaks about the sealing up of vision and prophecy with the Kingdom, he means that insofar as Old Testament prophecy is concerned, everything will indeed be fulfilled.

f. To Anoint the Most Holy Place

The *sixth* and final purpose of the Seventy Sevens reads: *to anoint the most holy.* From the Hebrew, it should actually read "to anoint a most holy place." It is not a most holy person but a most holy place that is to be anointed. The most holy place is the Temple, not the First Temple of Solomon, nor the Second Temple of Zerubbabel, and certainly not the Third Temple of the Tribulation. Rather, it is the Fourth Temple, the Temple of the Messianic Kingdom, built by the Lord Himself, and it will be anointed as part of the program of Seventy Sevens.

3. The Starting Point of the Seventy Sevens—Daniel 9:25a

> *Know therefore and discern, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore. . .*

The starting point of the Seventy Sevens is given in the first part of verse 25: *Know therefore and discern, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem*. Verse 24 already stated that the program of the Seventy Sevens concerns not only the Jewish people, but also the Jewish city of Jerusalem. Now Daniel is told that the Seventy Sevens will begin with a decree, one that involves the rebuilding of Jerusalem.

The Seventy Sevens is then subdivided into three units: seven sevens, sixty-two sevens, and one seven.

4. The First Sixty-Nine Sevens—Daniel 9:25b

> *And to build Jerusalem unto the anointed one, the prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: it shall*

be built again, with street and moat, even in troublous times.

The second part of verse 25 speaks of the first sixty-nine sevens by combining the first two subdivisions: the seven sevens and the sixty-two sevens.

a. The Seven Sevens or Forty-Nine Years

The first subdivision, the seven sevens, is a total of forty-nine years and refers to the forty-nine year period that it took to rebuild Jerusalem. In speaking of the rebuilding of Jerusalem, it speaks of the city as being *built again, with street and moat, even in troublous times.* The first subdivision of the Seventy Sevens, then, is the seven sevens or forty-nine years during which time Jerusalem was rebuilt. Only after forty-nine years was the rebuilding process brought to completion.

b. The Sixty-Two Sevens or Four Hundred Thirty-Four Years

The second subdivision of the Seventy Sevens is the sixty-two sevens, comprising a total of 434 years. Insofar as this passage is concerned, there was no break between the first and the second subdivisions of the Seventy Sevens. The sixty-two sevens immediately followed the seven sevens, or the 434 years immediately followed the forty-nine years. Combining seven sevens and sixty-two sevens gives a total of sixty-nine sevens; or combining forty-nine years with 434 years gives a total of 483 years. A total of 483 years will transpire from the time that the decree is issued until the coming of the Messiah, *the prince*. Hence the first 483 years of the 490 year period came to an end with the First Coming of the Messiah.

5. The Events Between the Sixty-Ninth and the Seventieth Sevens—Daniel 9:26

And after the threescore and two weeks shall the anointed one be cut off, and shall have nothing: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and even unto the end shall be war; desolations are determined.

After saying exactly how many years would transpire before the First Coming in verse 25, Daniel is now told of events coming between the sixty-ninth seven and the seventieth seven in verse 26. While there was no gap of time between the first subdivision and the second subdivision of the Seventy Sevens, there is a gap of time between the second subdivision and the third subdivision. Verse 26 starts out: ***And after*** *the threescore and two* [62] *weeks*, after the second subdivision, certain things must occur before the third subdivision begins in verse 27. When he says, "after the sixty-two sevens," he means after the conclusion of the second subdivision of the Seventy Sevens and before the beginning of the third subdivision of the Seventy Sevens. This phrase clearly shows that a gap of time exists between the second and third subdivisions, that is, between the sixty-ninth seven and the seventieth seven. In this gap of time three events are to occur.

a. The Messiah Would Be Killed

First, the Messiah shall *be cut off, and shall have nothing*. The expression *be cut off* means "to be killed." This occurred in A.D. 30, approximately thirty-five years after the birth of Jesus. Furthermore, it says: *and shall have nothing*. The noun may mean "nothingness," to explain His state at death, or the Hebrew term may also mean "but not for Himself," meaning He did not die for Himself, but for others. That is probably the intent of the passage.

b. The Destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple

> *The people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, . . .*

The word *people* in the Hebrew text has a definite article. It is ***the*** *people*, a specific people, who are the subject of the action. In other words, it is not *the prince that shall come* who will destroy the city and the Temple, but rather, *the people of the prince that shall come*. The point of that second phrase in verse 26 is that the nationality of *the people* and *the prince that shall come* are one and the same. *The prince that shall come* in this context is the Antichrist of whom Daniel has

already spoken in chapters 7 and 8. By saying *the prince*, Daniel uses the article of previous reference, because he has spoken of him in the previous chapters. *The prince that shall come*, which is still future, is of the same nationality as *the people* who will destroy the city and the Temple. After the Messiah is cut off, the city and the Temple will be destroyed.

This occurred in A.D. 70, forty years after the death of the Messiah. It is known from history who *the people* were. The *people* who destroyed the city and the Temple in A.D. 70 were the Gentiles of Rome, the Romans. Since the Antichrist must be of the same nationality as the people who destroyed the city and the Temple, it is this verse that shows that the Antichrist will be a Gentile of Roman origin.

Then he states: *and the end thereof shall be with a flood*, meaning that the end of Jerusalem and the Temple shall be the result of *a flood*. Whenever the figure of a flood is used symbolically, it always is a symbol of a military invasion. Jerusalem was destroyed by a Roman military invasion, first under Vespasian and then under Titus.

c. Continuing War

Even unto the end shall be war; . . .

For the remainder of the interval before the start of the seventieth seven, the Land will be characterized by war. This has certainly been true throughout the history of the Middle East. As a result of the wars, *desolations are determined*, a reference to the state of the Land as *determined* or decreed by God.

6. The Seventieth Seven—Daniel 9:27

The third subdivision of the Seventy Sevens is the last seven, the seventieth seven, and is dealt with in verse 27:

> *And he shall make a firm covenant with many for one week: and in the middle of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease; and upon the wing of abominations shall come one that makes desolate; and even unto the full end, and that determined, shall wrath be poured out upon the desolate.*

This last seven is a total of seven years and is the same seven years as the Great Tribulation. These seven years, the seventieth seven, are subdivided in this verse into two equal halves of 3½ years each. Elsewhere in Daniel and in Revelation, they are given different descriptive terms. Each half is referred to in three different ways: sometimes as *1,260 days* (Rev. 12:6); sometimes as *forty-two months* (Rev. 11:2-3; 13:5); and sometimes as *a time, times and half a time* (Dan. 7:25). In all three cases, they are equal to two 3½-year periods comprising this seven-year period.

The starting point of the first subdivision of seven sevens was the decree to rebuild Jerusalem. Since the second subdivision of sixty-two sevens immediately follwed the first subdivision there was no need for a sign that signaled the beginning of the second subdivision. Since that left a gap of time between the record and the third subdivision, it was necessary to provide a sign that will inaugurate the third subdivision.

a. The Firm Covenant

The verse states: *he shall make a firm covenant with many for one week* [one seven]. This is the starting point of the seventieth seven. The pronoun *he* in verse 27 goes back to its nearest antecedent: *the prince that shall come*, in verse 26. The *he* who makes a covenant in verse 27 and *the prince that shall come* are one and the same person, better known in evangelical circles as the Antichrist. The *prince that shall come*, or the Antichrist, will make *a firm covenant*. He will make it firm; he will make it strong. The Hebrew word does not mean to renew an existing covenant, but to make an original one containing strong guarantees. Exactly what it will guarantee will be made clear in the next passage.

The starting point of the seventieth seven of Daniel, the last seven, is still in the future and the starting point of the Great Tribulation is the signing of a seven-year covenant. It will not be the Rapture that will begin the Tribulation. The Rapture will come some time before the Tribulation starts. It may come just before or it may come ten, twenty, thirty years or more before the Tribulation starts. While the Bible teaches that the Rapture will precede the Tribulation, it never says that the Rapture **begins** the Tribulation. Rather, the event that begins the Tribulation is the signing of the seven-year covenant.

Furthermore, it states that the covenant is made *with many*; not with all, but *with many*. The Hebrew text uses a definite article meaning *the*

many. This is the leadership of Israel that will be empowered to sign covenants of this nature. The covenant is made for one seven. On one hand, it begins the seven years of the Tribulation, but on the other hand, it is also signed for the specific purpose of being in effect for seven years.

b. The Cessation of the Sacrificial System

The verse goes on to state that in the middle of the seven: *he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease.* In the middle of the seventieth seven, that is, after the first 3½ years, the covenant will be broken. When it is broken, *he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease.* There will be a forced cessation of the sacrificial system. This same point is made in Revelation 11:1-2.

c. Idol Worship

Following the breaking of the covenant and the cessation of the sacrificial system, the next line states:

> *Upon the wing of abominations shall come one that makes desolate; . . .*

The word *wing* refers to the pinnacle of the Temple, and it is a Hebrew word that means "an overspreading influence." This overspreading influence will be upon the pinnacle of the Temple. This specifically refers to the worship of the Antichrist, when he declares himself to be the one true god (II Thes. 2:3-4). The word *abomination* in Hebrew refers to "an image" or "idol," meaning that an image or idol of the Antichrist will be set up in the Temple Compound on the pinnacle of the Temple itself. This is also spoken of in Daniel 12:11 and Matthew 24:15. The image itself is spoken of in Revelation 13:14-15.

> *Upon the wing of abominations* [upon the overspreading influence of idol worship] *shall come one that makes desolate.*

The *one that makes desolate* is the Antichrist, who will cause desolations to fall upon the Jewish people.

d. The Completion of the Tribulation

The verse then states:

> *Even unto the full end, and that determined, shall wrath be poured out upon the desolate.*

The phrase *even unto the full end* is a Hebrew word that means "to finish" or "to complete." To the end, to the finish, to the completion of the seventieth seven these things, these desolations, are determined. The word *determined* means "to be decreed beforehand," because the events spelled out in Daniel 9:27 were already prophesied and decreed long before the Tribulation. This is seen in Isaiah 10:23 and 28:22.

The phrase also means that the Tribulation will not go a single day beyond its predetermined duration. It will end on the exact day. The same point is made in Matthew 24:22, where it reads: *And except those days had been shortened* [or more literally, except those days had been cut short], *no flesh would have been saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.* It is not that the Tribulation will last less than seven years; rather, it will not be allowed to last a single day beyond its allotted time of exactly seven years, and no more.

The last phrase is: *shall wrath be poured out upon the desolate.* The word translated *desolate* can also be translated as "a desolator." If taken to mean "desolate," it refers to the Jewish people during the second half of the Tribulation, when wrath is *poured out upon the desolate*. If it refers to "a desolator," it refers to the Antichrist and to his destruction at the Second Coming on the very last day of the seventieth seven.

B. Isaiah 28:14-22

While Daniel 9:27 presents the covenant that begins the Tribulation from man's perspective, Isaiah 28:14-22 views the covenant from God's perspective. Verse 14 reveals God's viewpoint of *the many* who enter the covenant:

> *Wherefore hear the word of Jehovah, ye scoffers, that rule this people that is in Jerusalem: . . .*

God calls the ones making this covenant *scoffers*. He considers them mockers rather than serious leaders.

Verse 15 gives the reason that God considers them thus and provides God's viewpoint of the covenant itself:

> *Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with Sheol are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us; for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves: . . .*

Here, in vivid terms, it can be seen why God calls the leaders *scoffers.* It is obvious that the leaders of Israel will go into this covenant in order to obtain some measure of security and to escape the *overflowing scourge*. The figure of a flood, when used symbolically, is always a symbol of a military invasion. Hence, the leaders of Israel will believe that by entering the covenant, they will be free from any further military invasions. However, God declares that this is not a covenant of life, but a covenant of death. It is not a covenant of Heaven, but a covenant of Hell. Rather than gaining security, they will receive a strong measure of insecurity. There is a common misconception that Israel will accept the Antichrist as the messiah. The Scriptures nowhere state any such thing. The fact is, Israel will not accept him as the messiah. Israel will make a covenant with him and will place her trust for her security in this covenant. But Israel will never accept him as the messiah.

Verse 16 speaks of the *non-many* who refuse to enter into the covenant:

> *Therefore thus says the Lord Jehovah, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone of sure foundation: he that believes shall not be in haste.*

This verse makes clear that there will be a segment of Jews, as there were in Daniel 9:27, who will refuse to have anything to do with this covenant. They will not be in haste to enter into it nor to identify themselves with it.

Then, in verses 17-22, the same three results are found as in Daniel 9:27. First, in verses 17-18, the covenant is broken followed by the military invasions they hoped to escape:

> *And I will make justice the line, and righteousness the plummet; and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the*

> *waters shall overflow the hiding-place. And your covenant with death shall be annulled, and your agreement with Sheol shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it.*

Second, in verses 19-20, desolations fall upon the Jewish people:

> *As often as it passes through, it shall take you; for morning by morning shall it pass through, by day and by night: and it shall be nought but terror to understand the message. For the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it; and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it.*

Rather than having security, they will have insecurity. This insecurity is pictured as tremendous discomfiture and is illustrated in two ways. *First*, it is like a man trying to stretch himself out on a bed that is too short for him. *Second*, it is like a man trying to wrap himself up in a blanket to protect himself from the cold, but the blanket is too small to cover all of his body. In place of comfort, there will be discomfort. In place of security there will be insecurity.

The third result is the wrath of God, emphasized in verses 21-22:

> *For Jehovah will rise up as in mount Perazim, he will be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon; that he may do his work, his strange work, and bring to pass the act, his strange act. Now therefore be ye not scoffers, lest your bonds be made strong; for a decree of destruction have I heard from the Lord, Jehovah of hosts, upon the whole earth.*

Two of the Old Testament names for the Tribulation are given in this passage: *Jehovah's strange work* and *Jehovah's strange act*. It is given these two unusual names because of the latter phrase in verse 22: *for a decree of destruction have I heard from the Lord, Jehovah of hosts, upon the whole earth.* This decree is issued in Heaven because of the covenant that is signed on earth. It is *strange* in that it calls for the destruction of the *whole* earth. This decree of destruction is the same as the Seven-Sealed Scroll of Revelation five. As the next chapter will show, with the breaking of the seals, there is massive destruction of the earth. But this decree of destruction will be issued only when the covenant is signed.

So then, the same point made in Daniel 9:27 is made by Isaiah. The Tribulation begins with the signing of the Seven-Year Covenant between the leaders of Israel and the Antichrist. Once that covenant is signed, the Tribulation begins and a decree of destruction is issued by God Himself.

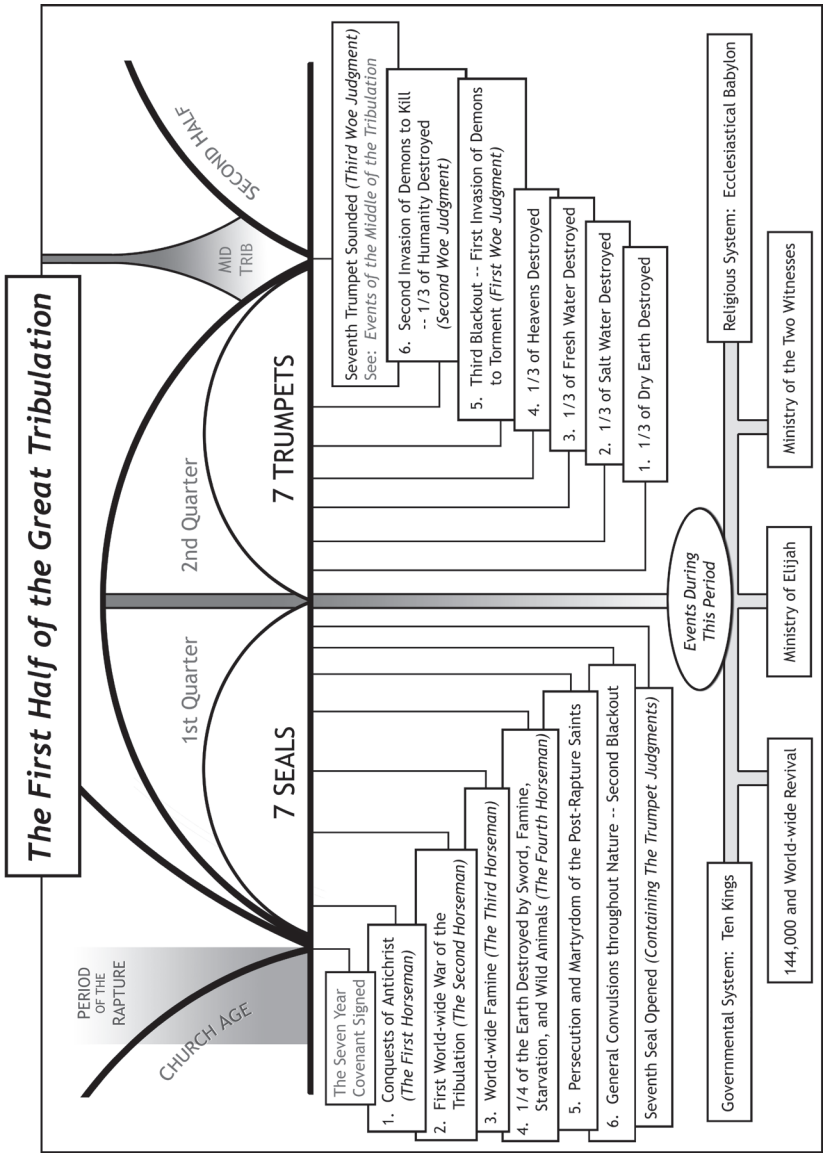

The First Half of the Great Tribulation
PERIOD OF THE RAPTURE
CHURCH AGE
1st Quarter
2nd Quarter
MID TRIB
SECOND HALF
7 SEALS
7 TRUMPETS
The Seven Year Covenant Signed
1. Conquests of Antichrist (The First Horseman)
2. First World-wide War of the Tribulation (The Second Horseman)
3. World-wide Famine (The Third Horseman)
4. 1/4 of the Earth Destroyed by Sword, Famine, Starvation, and Wild Animals (The Fourth Horseman)
5. Persecution and Martyrdom of the Post-Rapture Saints
6. General Convulsions throughout Nature -- Second Blackout
Seventh Seal Opened (Containing The Trumpet Judgments)
Seventh Trumpet Sounded (Third Woe Judgment)
See: Events of the Middle of the Tribulation
6. Second Invasion of Demons to Kill -- 1/3 of Humanity Destroyed (Second Woe Judgment)
5. Third Blackout -- First Invasion of Demons to Torment (First Woe Judgment)
4. 1/3 of Heavens Destroyed
3. 1/3 of Fresh Water Destroyed
2. 1/3 of Salt Water Destroyed
1. 1/3 of Dry Earth Destroyed
Events During This Period
Governmental System: Ten Kings
144,000 and World-wide Revival
Ministry of Elijah
Religious System: Ecclesiastical Babylon
Ministry of the Two Witnesses

Chart #4

TEN

The Events of the First Half of the Tribulation

Revelation 6-18 deals with the Great Tribulation period. Chapters 6-9 and 17 are concerned with the events of the first half, chapters 10-14 with the events of the middle, and chapters 15-16 and 18 with the events of the second half.

Regarding the events of the first half, two things should be noted. *First*: some events occur in chronological sequence, with one event following the other in order. The Seal Judgments of chapter six and the Trumpet Judgments of chapters 8-9 fall into this category. *Second*: other events occur throughout the first half simultaneously with the sequential events. There are five such events occurring throughout the first half. Two of these events actually begin before the Tribulation but continue on into and through the first half. One is the ministry of Elijah the Prophet. The other is the governmental system of the ten kings and the Ten Kingdoms. As was stated earlier, after the fall of the One World Government before the Tribulation, the world is divided into ten kingdoms. This Ten Kingdom Division continues into and throughout the first half of the Tribulation.

The other three events will be discussed later in this chapter. They are the ministry of the 144,000 and the worldwide revival (Rev. 7), the ministry of the Two Witnesses (Rev. 11), and the rule of the Ecclesiastical Babylon that will control the religious affairs of the world during the first half (Rev. 17).

A. The Seal Judgments

The Seal Judgments of Revelation six are the first of three series of judgments during the Tribulation. These begin as a result of the signing

of the Seven-Year Covenant and are part of the decree of the destruction upon the whole earth (Is. 28:22).

There are seven Seal Judgments, with the seventh containing the Seven Trumpet Judgments. The seventh Trumpet Judgment contains the seven Bowl Judgments. The first four of the seven Seal Judgments are also known as "the four horsemen of the Apocalypse."

1. The First Seal—Revelation 6:1-2

> *And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying as with a voice of thunder, Come. And I saw, and behold, a white horse, and he that sat thereon had a bow; and there was given unto him a crown: and he came forth conquering, and to conquer.*

With the first horseman of the Apocalypse, Revelation introduces a man wearing a *crown* and *conquering, and to conquer*. This figure on the white horse will play a major role in the Tribulation period. That the figure is not Messiah is indicated by the fact that the crown here is a *stephanos* crown, the crown of an overcomer or victor. It is not the *diadem* crown, the crown of sovereignty and royalty, the type of crown Messiah will wear in chapter 19. This figure who enters the Tribulation *conquering, and to conquer* is the Antichrist.

To fully understand the person and the activities of the Antichrist, he needs to be viewed within the framework of the counterfeit trinity. According to Revelation 13, an unholy trinity will be set up in the Great Tribulation. Satan will play the role of the counterfeit father. For just as the true Father gave all His authority to the Son, Satan will give all his authority to the Antichrist. The False Prophet will play the role of the counterfeit holy spirit. The ministry of the Holy Spirit is to call men to worship Messiah. The ministry of the False Prophet will be to call all men to worship the Antichrist. In every detail, as will be seen later in this study, the Antichrist will play the part of a counterfeit son. Once the role he is to play is comprehended, many things said of him in the Scriptures will be more easily understood.

a. The Names of the Antichrist

The person who is to have the central role in human affairs during the Great Tribulation is given a number of names throughout the Scriptures. These various names, titles or descriptions simply portray the various facets of his character. Taken together, these names portray him as the epitome of evil in the human realm, just as Satan is the epitome of evil in the angelic realm.

The various names are as follows:

The Seed of Satan—Genesis 3:15
The Little Horn—Daniel 7:8
The King of Fierce Countenance—Daniel 8:23
The Prince That Shall Come—Daniel 9:26
The Desolator—Daniel 9:27
The Willful King—Daniel 11:36
The Man of Sin—II Thessalonians 2:3
The Son of Perdition—II Thessalonians 2:3
The Lawless One—II Thessalonians 2:8
The Antichrist—I John 2:22
The Beast—Revelation 11:7

Of these eleven names, six are found in the Old Testament and five in the New. Of the Old Testament names, all are in the Book of Daniel except for one. Of the New Testament names, three are given by Paul, all in one chapter of one book out of his many writings. The other two names are given by the Apostle John in two of his five books.

The vast majority of prophetic scholars have used a single name for this future world dictator: the Antichrist. Although this may not be his most common name in Scripture, it is a well-chosen title. It is a title that describes his true intent, which is to be against Messiah. All his other names essentially portray the various characteristics which he will use in his opposition to Messiah.

However, one should begin to see the counterfeit nature in this multiplicity of names. For just as the True Son has a number of different names, titles, and descriptions, so does the counterfeit son.

b. The Origin of the Antichrist

The Antichrist, being the counterfeit son, will have both a natural

origin and a supernatural origin in imitation of the True Son. The natural origin of the True Son is that He was born of a Jewish woman. The supernatural origin was the miraculous virgin conception by means of the overshadowing power of the Holy Spirit. The end product was the God-Man.

(1) His Natural Origin

As to his natural origin, speculation has centered around his nationality, with the question being whether or not the Antichrist will be a Jew.

(a) The Antichrist Will Not Be a Jew

Those who believe that the Antichrist has to be a Jew do so for several reasons. One reason that is given could be classed as the *logical* reason. Stated in a syllogism, this argument goes as follows:

Major Premise:	The Jews will accept the Antichrist as the messiah;
Minor Premise:	The Jews will never accept a Gentile as the messiah;
Conclusion:	The Antichrist will be a Jew.

The argument is that the Jews will accept him as the messiah. The Scriptures make no such claim. While the Bible teaches that Israel enters into a covenant relationship with the Antichrist, this in no way means that they will accept him as the messiah. Some have stretched this reasoning to say that the Jews would not even enter into a covenant with a Gentile. But none of this is valid, for Jews have often entered into covenant relationships with non-Jews in the past.[1] But this logical reason also fails to view the whole issue. It could be asked another way: how would the Gentiles accept him if he is a Jew? So the logical reason could be used either way, and it is not valid in and of itself. The argument for his Jewishness based on this kind of logic is not valid. It is an argument based on two assumptions, neither of

[1] Recent examples include the peace treaties signed between Israel and Egypt, Jordan, and the Palestine Liberation Organization, but no one in Israel believed that Sadat, Hussein, or Arafat were the Messiah.

which is able to stand on its own. Furthermore, the final analysis as to whether something is true cannot be based on logic, but on Scripture. The ultimate question is not, "Is it logical?" but, "Is it scriptural?" The assumption necessary for the logical reason cannot be validated by Scripture.

Another reason people often give for the Jewishness of the Antichrist is based on Revelation 7:1-8. Stated as a syllogism, this argument would read as follows:

Major Premise:	The tribe from which the Antichrist would come would not be listed among the 144,000;
Minor Premise:	Dan is not among the 144,000;
Conclusion:	The Antichrist is from the Tribe of Dan.

The folly of such reasoning should be clear to anyone holding to a literal interpretation of Scripture. First of all, it is an argument of conjecture. If the interpreter is at all honest, he would have to admit that he really does not know why Dan is left out of the 144,000. The Bible nowhere spells out why Dan is excluded. If the reason is what the proponent of this view says it is, then it should be explained why an entire tribe is punished because of one man. Furthermore, why is Dan included in the Millennial Israel (Ezek. 48:1) if there is a curse on him? Assuming information where the Bible is silent is a danger to sound hermeneutics. This argument also involves circular reasoning. To repeat the syllogism:

Major Premise:	The tribe from which the Antichrist will come will not be listed among the 144,000;
Minor Premise:	Dan is not among the 144,000;
Conclusion:	The Antichrist is from the Tribe of Dan.

From this syllogism another is developed:

Major Premise:	The Antichrist is from the Tribe of Dan;

Minor Premise: Dan is a Jewish tribe;
Conclusion: The Antichrist is a Jew.

Or they can be stated another way:

1. The Antichrist is a Jew;
2. The tribe from which the Antichrist would come would not be listed among the 144,000;
3. Dan is not among the 144,000;
4. The Antichrist is from the Tribe of Dan;
5. Dan is a Jewish tribe;
6. The Antichrist is therefore a Jew.

No matter how it is put, this is purely circular reasoning, the truth of which is dependent upon the truth of the presupposition. While circular reasoning is consistent within itself, the consistency does not make it scriptural. The presupposition of circular reasoning has no proof on which to base this doctrine.

The scriptural text used most often for the Jewishness of the Antichrist is found in Daniel 11:37, which in the King James Version reads as follows:

> *Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all.*

The whole argument rests on the phrase, *the God of his fathers*, which is taken to be clear-cut evidence that the Antichrist is a Jew. It should be pointed out, however, that the argument for the Jewishness of the Antichrist from this verse is based upon the King James Version. But even if it is granted (and it is not) that the King James is the correct translation from the original, the phrase "God of his fathers" need not be used exclusively of the Jews. The phrase "God of his fathers" allows for a wider interpretation. For instance, he could be a person who had Christian parents but rejects their God in this sense. It could refer to a Roman Catholic or a pagan just as easily as to a Jewish person. The one phrase where the term "Antichrist" is used in I John 2:18-19 refers to those who apostatize from Christianity and not from Judaism.

Ultimately, Bible doctrine should be based on the Hebrew and Greek

texts since they are the closest to the original autographs. To base a doctrine on a translation, especially when that translation is know to contain error, is folly. This is exactly the case with the King James rendering of Daniel 11:37. Any student of Hebrew would see from the original text that the correct translation should be: "the *gods* of his fathers," and not "the *God* of his fathers." In the whole context, Daniel 11:36-39, the term *god* is used a total of eight times. In the Hebrew text, six of these times it is in the singular and twice in the plural, one of which is the phrase in verse 37. The very fact that the plural form of the word "god" is used in a context where the singular is found in the majority of cases makes this a reference to heathen deities and not a reference to the God of Israel.

Moreover, there is much external evidence to show that this is the correct rendering of the text. The earliest known translation of the Old Testament is the Septuagint (LXX), which is a Greek translation of the Old Testament made about 250 B.C. The LXX has translated the word as "gods," which is in keeping with the Hebrew text. Further evidence that the King James Version is incorrect in its translation here is seen in the fact that almost all other English translations, both from Jewish and non-Jewish sources, have rendered the word for "god" in the plural. Two major Jewish translations, the Jewish Publication Society of America and the Isaac Leeser translation, have rendered the phrase "the gods of his fathers." In Christian translations—such as the American Standard Version, the Revised Standard Version, the Amplified Old Testament, the New American Standard, and the New International Version, among others—have all translated the phrase to read *the gods of his fathers.* Furthermore, the New Scofield Reference Bible, itself based on the King James Version, has done a great service to scholarship by rendering this passage to read in the plural form. Commentaries based on the Hebrew rather than the English text recognized the correct reading of Daniel 11:37. This is true of the official Orthodox Jewish commentary in the *Soncino Commentary on the Old Testament*, as well as the prominent Christian commentary in the *Kiel and Delitzsch Commentary.*

All this evidence shows that Daniel 11:37, the chief argument used by proponents that the Antichrist is to be a Jew, gives no validity to this belief. A doctrine of such magnitude must not be based solely on the King James Version as is this one. It has been shown that even if the King James Version were correct, it would not limit the expression to Jews, but it would

be valid for believers as well. However, the truth is that the text is dealing with heathen deities and not with the Jewish Jehovah. If anything, this passage implies that the Antichrist will be a Gentile rather than a Jew.

(b) The Antichrist Will Be a Gentile

It has been shown that the Bible does not teach that the Antichrist is to be a Jew. This raises the question: do the Scriptures plainly teach that the Antichrist is to be a Gentile? The answer is that they do. This is seen to be true from biblical typology, biblical imagery, and the nature of the Times of the Gentiles.

That the Antichrist is to be a Gentile is seen first by looking at *biblical typology*. The only biblical type of the Antichrist is given in the person of Antiochus Epiphanes, a Gentile. The reason is that the Antichrist himself is to be a Gentile.

Another argument for the Gentile nature of the Antichrist is found in *biblical imagery*. Whenever the word *sea* is used symbolically in the Scriptures, especially in the Book of Revelation, it is a symbol of the Gentile nations. Since the Beast in Revelation 13:1-10 arises out of the sea, and since the sea represents the Gentile nations (Rev. 17:15), this points to the Antichrist as being of Gentile origin.

But the key to his Gentile nationality is to be found in the nature of the Times of the Gentiles. It is agreed by most Premillennialists that the Times of the Gentiles does not end until the Second Coming of Messiah. It is further agreed that the Antichrist is the final ruler of the Times of the Gentiles (extended information on this was presented in Chapter 2, The Times of the Gentiles). If this is so, how then can a Jew be the last ruler when only the Gentiles can have the pre-eminence? To say that the Antichrist is to be a Jew contradicts the very nature of the Times of the Gentiles. A Jew heading up the final world throne of Gentile power is an impossible postulation. So while arguments from typology and imagery are not strong by themselves, when coupled with the clear scriptural teaching of the nature of the Times of the Gentiles, they can be powerful evidence that the Antichrist is to be a Gentile.

(c) The Antichrist Will Be of Roman Origin

But not only does the Bible reveal the fact that the Antichrist is to be a Gentile, it also reveals the very nationality of the Antichrist. The nationality of the Antichrist can be deduced from Daniel 9:26-27:

> *And after the threescore and two weeks shall the anointed one be cut off, and shall have nothing: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and even unto the end shall be war; desolations are determined. And he shall make a firm covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease; and upon the wing of abominations shall come one that makes desolate; and even unto the full end, and that determined, shall wrath be poured out upon the desolate.*

The first order of business is to identify the *he* in verse 27 who makes the Seven-Year Covenant with Israel. The rules of Hebrew grammar must be used to determine this. The fact that in the Hebrew text the third masculine singular is used means that one must look for an antecedent. The nearest antecedent is *the prince that shall come* in verse 26. So the *he* of verse 27 is the same as *the prince that shall come* of verse 26.

The next order of business is to establish the identity of this prince. It is generally recognized that this prince is the Antichrist himself. Daniel used the definite article since he had already spoken of him in chapter seven of his book as *the little horn*, and again in chapter eight. So then, *the prince that shall come* is also the *he* who makes the covenant with Israel, and both have reference to the Antichrist. Verse 26 also states that *the prince that shall come* is of the same nationality as *the people* who will destroy the city and the Sanctuary. The third step is to establish the nationality of this people, and history has shown that this was accomplished by the Romans in A.D. 70. The obvious conclusion, then, is that the Antichrist is a Gentile of Roman origin.

To summarize the argument of the Gentile Roman origin of the Antichrist, it could be stated as follows:

1. The *he* who makes a covenant and the *prince that shall come* are one and the same person;
2. They both have reference to the Antichrist;

3. The Antichrist is of the same nationality as the people who destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple;
4. The Romans destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple in A.D. 70;
5. The Antichrist, then, will be of Roman origin.

The conclusion is that the Antichrist will not be a Jew. Most people who believe the contrary merely assume it without giving any reason. Those who present a logical reason—"How will the Jews accept him if he is not a Jew?"—are reminded that the Bible and not logic is the basis for doctrine, including this one. Those who argue from Revelation 7:4-8 are arguing from conjecture and circular reasoning and not from any clear statement from Scripture. Those who argue from Daniel 11:37 are basing doctrine on a faulty translation of the Hebrew text.

Not only has it been concluded negatively that the Antichrist is not a Jew, but it is concluded positively that he is a Gentile, as seen from biblical typology and imagery, along with the very nature of the Times of the Gentiles as presented by the Scriptures. The Bible not only teaches that the Antichrist is a Gentile, but it reveals his exact nationality: a Gentile of Roman origin, as seen by a careful study of Daniel 9:26-27.

(2) His Supernatural Origin

The True Son has both a natural origin and a supernatural origin, which became possible by virtue of the virgin conception. Since the Antichrist is to be a counterfeit son, he too will have both a natural and a supernatural origin by means of a counterfeit virgin conception.

His supernatural origin is to be found in Genesis 3:15:

> *And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed: he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.*

This verse not only contains the first prophecy of the coming of the Messiah, it at the same time gives the first prophecy of the Antichrist. It should be noted that this verse speaks of enmity in two pairs. First, there is going to be enmity between Satan and the woman. This satanic enmity with woman can be seen to play itself out in the account of Genesis six, where Satan had some of his demons intermarry with human women for the purpose of perverting womankind in an attempt to

nullify the first messianic prophecy. This attempt was stopped by means of the worldwide Flood. But second, the verse states that there is going to be enmity between the woman's Seed and Satan's seed. The woman's Seed is Jesus the Messiah. As God, He was eternally existent; as a Man, He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin. So He was truly both God and Man. The very mention of a seed of a woman goes contrary to the biblical norm, for nationality was always reckoned after the seed of the man. That is why, in all the genealogies of Scripture, only the male names are given with some very rare exceptions. The reason why the Messiah must be reckoned after the Seed of the woman is explained by Isaiah 7:14: the Messiah will be born of a virgin. Since the Messiah will not have a human father, His national origin will have to be reckoned after the woman, since His humanity comes only from her. So the very expression *her Seed* implied a miraculous conception. In reference to Satan's *seed*, this term, being in the same verse, implies the same thing: that of a supernatural and miraculous conception. The enmity against the Seed of the woman comes from the seed of Satan. If the Seed of the woman is Messiah, the seed of Satan can only be the Antichrist. From this passage, then, it can be deduced that Satan will counterfeit the virgin conception and will some day impregnate a Roman woman who will give birth to Satan's seed who is going to be the Antichrist. The woman herself may not be a virgin, but the conception of Antichrist will be through the supernatural power of Satan. By this means, the Antichrist will have a supernatural origin.

Another passage dealing with this is II Thessalonians 2:9:

> *Even he, whose coming is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, . . .*

The Greek word translated *working* is the word *energeo*, which means "to energize." His coming, then, will be brought about by the energizing of Satan. In other words, the Antichrist comes into being by some supernatural means, and that supernatural means is a counterfeit virgin conception.

Clearly then, the counterfeit son, in imitation of the True Son, will have both a natural origin and a supernatural origin. As to his supernatural origin, his father will be Satan. As to his natural origin, his mother will be a woman of Roman nationality. A time is coming when the situation of Genesis six will be repeated. A fallen angelic being, this time Satan himself,

will impregnate a Gentile woman of Roman origin who will then give birth to Satan's son. The end product will be a counterfeit god-man.

c. The Character and the Rise of the Antichrist

Because of his supernatural origin as Satan's seed, the Antichrist will always have access to the satanic and demonic realm. Ultimately, the counterfeit son will accept the offer that the True Son rejected. When Satan offered Messiah all the kingdoms of the world on the condition that Messiah would worship him just once, Messiah rejected the temptation by stating that only one Person is to be worshiped, and that is God Himself. The same offer will be made to the counterfeit son, who will accept Satan's offer of the kingdoms. When this temptation is accepted by the Antichrist, it will mark the beginning of his rise to political and religious domination of the world (Dan. 11:38-39; Rev. 13:2).

The rise to power of the Antichrist is described in two passages. The first passage is in Daniel 8:23-25:

> *And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power; and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper and do his pleasure; and he shall destroy the mighty ones and the holy people. And through his policy he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and in their security shall he destroy many: he shall also stand up against the prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.*

In this passage it is emphasized that *the king of fierce countenance*, or the Antichrist, will have the understanding of *dark sentences*. This means that he will have the same supernatural abilities to solve riddles that Daniel had in Daniel 5:12. Daniel's source was God, but the source for the Antichrist will be Satan. The Antichrist will have the power of the occult behind him. This is further spelled out in the following verse, where it is clearly stated that *his power* is going to *be mighty*, but it will not be *his own power*. In other words, the Antichrist will have access to a tremendous amount of power. However, the power is not his own; it originates from another source, from his father, Satan. He will seek to *destroy* the *holy people* of Israel with this

supernatural power. Verse 25 states that he is characterized by craftiness and deceit. By these means he will lull rulers into a sense of false security and take advantage of it for the purpose of uprooting them. For a time he will *prosper,* that is, be successful in his goals. He shall *magnify himself in his heart* and this will lead to his self-declaration of deity (II Thes. 2:3-4; Rev. 13:3-9). He will stand against *the prince of princes*, the Messiah, and so truly be the *ANTI*-CHRIST.

A second description of his rise to power is in Daniel 11:36-39:

> *And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods; and he shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished; for that which is determined shall be done. Neither shall he regard the gods of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god; for he shall magnify himself above all. But in his place shall he honor the god of fortresses; and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honor with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things. And he shall deal with the strongest fortresses by the help of a foreign god: whosoever acknowledges him he will increase with glory; and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for a price.*

In this passage, Daniel describes the Antichrist as a willful king (v. 36a), characterized by self-exaltation above all men, and self-deification by magnifying himself above even God (vv. 36b-37). In his self-exaltation, he will *speak against the God of gods* (Dan. 7:25), deifying himself and magnifying himself above all humanity. He will not desire the love of women which is natural to men, and so he will be inhuman in his disregard of women. The enmity of Satan against womanhood continues through Satan's seed. Furthermore, he will be under the total control of Satan (vv. 38-39). The passage states that he will honor a god that his ancestors on his mother's side never honored: *the god of fortresses*, who is Satan. His policy will be that "might makes right." Furthermore, with the *help* of this *foreign god*, Satan, he will be able to take over the strongest defenses in the world, and he will appear totally invincible. Those who submit to his authority and deity will be increased and given positions of status and authority in his kingdom. He will divide territory he has conquered among those who will be loyal to him and confess him to be god.

Thus, the Antichrist will be a Satan-controlled and Satan-energized being who will set out in worldwide conquest. The beginning of this conquest is seen in the first seal, though total control does not come until the middle of the Tribulation.

This, then, is the first horseman of the Apocalypse, representing the key personality during the Tribulation period. Later, more will be said concerning him.

2. The Second Seal—Revelation 6:3-4

> *And when he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, Come. And another horse came forth, a red horse: and to him that sat thereon it was given to take peace from the earth, and that they should slay one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.*

With the second horseman of the Apocalypse, peace is removed from the earth. The opposite of peace is war. Thus, the period of peace and false security that existed before the Tribulation is now shattered. As the Antichrist comes *conquering, and to conquer* in his worldwide conquest, the Tribulation begins with a war. There are three major wars during the period of the Tribulation, and the second seal is the first of these three wars. The second war will be in the middle of the Tribulation, and the third, which is the Campaign of Armageddon, toward the end of the Tribulation.

3. The Third Seal—Revelation 6:5-6

> *And when he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature saying, Come. And I saw, and behold, a black horse; and he that sat thereon had a balance in his hand. And I heard as it were a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, A measure of wheat for a shilling, and three measure of barley for a shilling; and the oil and the wine hurt you not.*

The third horseman of the Apocalypse brings a worldwide famine which often comes as a consequence of war. The expression, *a measure of wheat for a shilling, and three measures of barley for a shilling*, denotes a

great scarcity of these food items. The judgment of a worldwide famine, however, is tempered by mercy. For while there is a famine of food, there will be an abundance of medicine, for the *oil and wine* are not hurt. These items were used for medicinal purposes.

4. The Fourth Seal—Revelation 6:7-8

> *And when he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, Come. And I saw, and behold, a pale horse: and he that sat upon him, his name was Death; and Hades followed with him. And there was given unto them authority over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with famine, and with death, and by the wild beasts of the earth.*

The fourth horseman of the Apocalypse is the deadliest of all, for in this judgment, one-fourth of the world's population is destroyed. The population is destroyed by four means: the *sword*, which may mean either massive slaughter or another war; *famine*, meaning death by starvation; *pestilence*, meaning death by disease; and death by wild animals. Once food becomes scarce, wild animals which generally leave man alone will begin to attack man for food.

5. The Fifth Seal—Revelation 6:9-11

> *And when he opened the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of them that had been slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a great voice, saying, How long, O Master, the holy and true, do you not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And there was given them to each one a white robe; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little time, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, who should be killed even as they were, should have fulfilled their course.*

The fifth seal deals with the martyrs of the first half of the Tribulation. Thus, early in the Tribulation there is the persecution of the believers in Messiah. This raises two questions. *First*, with the Church already raptured,

who are these saints and how is it that they come to believe? *Second*, who is doing the persecuting? How these martyrs became believers will be explained in Revelation seven: namely, by the preaching of the 144,000 Jews. As to who is persecuting these believers, this will be answered by Revelation 17: namely, the Ecclesiastical Babylon.

6. The Sixth Seal—Revelation 6:12-17

> *And I saw when he opened the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the whole moon became as blood; and the stars of the heaven fell unto the earth, as a fig tree casts her unripe figs when she is shaken of a great wind. And the heaven was removed as a scroll when it is rolled up; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the princes, and the chief captains, and the rich, and the strong, and every bondman and freeman, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains; and they say to the mountains and to the rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of their wrath is come; and who is able to stand?*

Each series of judgments ends with convulsions of nature, and the sixth seal concludes the first series of judgments with such convulsions. The convulsions begin with an earthquake (v. 12a) followed by a blackout of the sun and moon, followed by a meteor shower (vv. 12b-14). As has been stated in Chapter V, Other Pretribulational Events, the Bible speaks of five blackouts during the end times, and this is the second blackout. Anarchy ensues as men begin to flee from the wrath of God rather than to turn to Him in faith (vv. 15-17). This passage shows that with the fifth seal, even unbelievers recognize that they are experiencing the wrath of God. They may have been able to explain away the previous judgments as natural catastrophes, but with the nature of the sixth seal, that will no longer be possible. It should be noted that the passage does not say that the wrath of God begins only with the sixth seal, but that only with the sixth seal do unbelievers recognize that it is the wrath of God.

B. The 144,000 Jews and the Worldwide Revival

Revelation seven deals with the second major purpose of the Great Tribulation, that of the worldwide revival. The chapter divides itself into two sections.

1. The Means of the Worldwide Revival—Revelation 7:1-8

> *After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that no wind should blow on the earth, or on the sea, or upon any tree. And I saw another angel ascend from the sunrising, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a great voice to the four angels to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we shall have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads. And I heard the number of them that were sealed, a hundred and forty and four thousand, sealed out of every tribe of the children of Israel:*
>
> *Of the Tribe of Judah were sealed twelve thousand;*
> *Of the Tribe of Reuben twelve thousand;*
> *Of the Tribe of Gad twelve thousand;*
> *Of the Tribe of Asher twelve thousand;*
> *Of the Tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand;*
> *Of the Tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand;*
> *Of the Tribe of Simeon twelve thousand;*
> *Of the Tribe of Levi twelve thousand;*
> *Of the Tribe of Issachar twelve thousand;*
> *Of the Tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand;*
> *Of the Tribe of Joseph twelve thousand;*
> *Of the Tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand.*

This passage describes the third of the five events happening throughout the first half of the Tribulation. This ministry of the 144,000 is something that occurs throughout the entire first half and not merely after the sixth seal judgment. In fact, it is going on during the Seal Judgments, and it is the means by which the fifth seal saints come to the Messiah. The passage begins with *After this,* which is not chronological, but merely the

next vision John sees.

In verses 1-3, the four angels which are commissioned to bring judgment on the earth are commanded to hold off their destruction until a specific number of servants are sealed. Sealing was done for two reasons: service and protection. Both reasons apply here. They are sealed for protection so that they cannot be hurt either by the judgments poured out by God or by the persecutions against believers. But they are also sealed for service, for they are the ones who will proclaim the message of the gospel in the Tribulation. The mention of *the four winds* shows that these 144,000 Jews will come from all parts of the world and not only from Israel.

In verses 4-8, the identification of those who are sealed is clearly specified as 144,000 Jews. To make it even more clear, twelve tribes are listed with the statement that 12,000 are chosen from each of the twelve tribes. Such careful delineation definitely indicates that these 144,000 are Jews and will be nothing else, in spite of much speculation to the contrary. The emphasis is on the Jewishness of the 144,000. Looking at the list of tribal names, some have concluded that the Tribe of Ephraim is left out, but this is not the case. In place of the name of Ephraim there is the name of his father Joseph (v. 8), but it is the same tribe. Such an interchange between *Joseph* and *Ephraim* is not unusual and also appears elsewhere, as in Ezekiel 37:16. But one tribe is left out, namely, the Tribe of Dan. No reason for this is given. A great deal of speculation and guesswork has developed as a result, mainly the idea that the Antichrist will come out of this tribe. But this has already been dealt with earlier. Others claim that the False Prophet will arise out of the Tribe of Dan and that is why that tribe is left out. But this, too, is pure speculation. There is nothing in the context to suggest either of these suppositions. The text itself does not state the reason why the Tribe of Dan is left out. The actual reason is simply to maintain the symmetry of twelve. When all tribal names are actually listed, the total comes to thirteen and not twelve because Joseph produced two tribes: Ephraim and Manasseh. In order to maintain the symmetry of twelve, one name must always be dropped. This is not the only place this happens. For example, in Deuteronomy 33, Moses presents his twelve tribal blessings, as Jacob did in Genesis 49. But to maintain the symmetry of twelve, Moses also had to drop one tribe, and that was the Tribe of Simeon. In Ezekiel 47-48, in describing the tribal settlement in the Messianic Kingdom, to maintain the symmetry of twelve, Ezekiel drops the Tribe of Levi, putting this tribe in a separate place and category. Just as there was no sinister

reason for dropping Simeon, there is no sinister reason for dropping Dan. In all cases, it was merely to retain the symmetry of twelve. In the Book of Revelation, three numbers are prominent: four, seven, and twelve. Hence, the dropping of Dan.

This ministry of the 144,000 Jews preaching the gospel fulfills the prophecy of Matthew 24:14.[2]

2. The Results—Revelation 7:9-17

> *After these things I saw, and behold, a great multitude, which no man could number, out of every nation and of all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, arrayed in white robes, and palms in their hands; and they cry with a great voice, saying, Salvation unto our God who sits on the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels were standing around about the throne, and about the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, These that are arrayed in the white robes, who are they, and whence came they? And I say unto him, My lord, you know. And he said to me, These are they that come out of the great tribulation, and they washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God; and they serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sits on the throne shall spread his tabernacle over them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun strike upon them, nor any heat: for the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them unto fountains of waters of life: and God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes.*

---

[2] For more information on the 144,000, see Chapter 8, The Great Tribulation: Introduction.

In verses 9-10, John sees a multitude of Gentiles from every nationality standing before the Throne of God. The expression *after these things* means that the salvation of these myriads of Gentiles follows chronologically the 144,000 Jews and there is a cause and effect relationship. After describing the worship of the One on the Throne (vv. 11-12), the text proceeds to identify who these Gentiles are that are found around the Throne (vv. 13-14). These Gentiles are identified as those who have *come out of the Great Tribulation*. They are saved Gentiles, for they have *washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb.* Since they follow chronologically the ministry of the 144,000 Jews, the implication is that they are the Gentiles who come to Messiah as a result of the preaching of the 144,000 Jews. Included are the fifth seal saints who suffered martyrdom. Because of the massive persecution that these Tribulation saints have undergone, this passage concludes with a description of the comfort they now enjoy in the presence of God (vv. 15-17).

From this chapter it should be evident that the Holy Spirit will be still at work in the Tribulation, for the work of regeneration is His particular ministry. While the work of restraining evil is removed, allowing the Antichrist to begin his evil rise to power, the Holy Spirit Himself will still be in the world and will have an active ministry. While He will no longer be baptizing (for that is a special ministry for the Church only),[3] He will be performing some of His other ministries, such as regeneration, filling, sealing, etc.

In all this, the second purpose of the Tribulation will be accomplished: that of bringing about a worldwide revival.

C. The Trumpet Judgments

1. The Prelude—Revelation 8:1-6

> *And when he opened the seventh seal, there followed a silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. And I saw the seven angels that stand before God; and there were given unto them seven trumpets. And another angel came and stood over the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto*

[3] See Chapter 6, The Eschatology of the Invisible Church.

> *him much incense, that he should add it unto the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, went up before God out of the angel's hand. And the angel took the censer; and he filled it with the fire of the altar, and cast it upon the earth: and there followed thunders, and voices, and lightnings, and an earthquake. And the seven angels that had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.*

In verses 1-2, the seventh seal is opened, and the seventh seal contains the second series of judgments, called the Trumpet Judgments. Verses 3-5 describe events in Heaven and earth just preceding the Trumpet Judgments. The act of adding incense to the prayers of the saints indicates that the Trumpet Judgments will answer the prayers of the saints, prayers already voiced in the fifth Seal Judgment. As a warning to the earth that the Trumpet Judgments are about to start, it is made to tremble with convulsions of nature. Then, in verse six, the seven angels prepare to sound the seven trumpets.

2. The First Trumpet—Revelation 8:7

> *And the first sounded, and there followed hail and fire, mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of the earth was burnt up, and the third part of the trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.*

With the sound of the first trumpet, one-third of the earth's dry surface is destroyed.

3. The Second Trumpet—Revelation 8:8-9

> *And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood; and there died the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, even they that had life; and the third part of the ships was destroyed.*

The second trumpet destroys one-third of the salt waters, including sea life. The *great mountain burning with fire* may refer to a meteor or a

volcano, but the results are supernatural, for they of themselves would not turn the sea to blood. A number of the Tribulation judgments are similar to the ten plagues God brought on Egypt, and here is one such similarity.

4. The Third Trumpet—Revelation 8:10-11

> *And the third angel sounded, and there fell from heaven a great star, burning as a torch, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of the waters; and the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.*

The third trumpet destroys one-third of the sweet water. Whenever the word *star* is used symbolically, it is a common symbol of an angel, and this is the case here. The angel's name is *Wormwood*, showing the angel to be a fallen one. This fallen angel causes one-third of the sweet water to turn bitter, which in turn causes the death of many. Fallen angels will be used on several occasions to render judgment on the earth, and this is one such occasion.

5. The Fourth Trumpet—Revelation 8:12

> *And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; that the third part of them should be darkened, and the day should not shine for the third part of it, and the night in like manner.*

The fourth trumpet destroys one-third of the earth's light sources. These verses do not necessarily imply that one-third of the sun, moon, and stars are destroyed, only that their light is somehow hindered from reaching the earth. As a result of this judgment, one-third of the light source for the daytime and one-third of the light source for the nighttime are completely blacked out.

6. The Prelude to the Woe Judgments—Revelation 8:13

> *And I saw, and I heard an eagle, flying in mid heaven, say-*

ing with a great voice, Woe, woe, woe, for them that dwell on the earth, by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, who are yet to sound.

With the first four trumpets having sounded, this verse introduces the final three. Because the three final Trumpet Judgments are especially severe for mankind on the earth, they are called Woe Judgments. As bad as the first four judgments were, the latter three will be far more severe. This severity is so pronounced that there is a warning of their approach sounded with a voice in the atmospheric heavens. The *eagle* is most likely a *seraph* (Rev. 4:7) chosen to give this warning to the earth. The first two of these Woe Judgments are demonic invasions, and the third one contains the Bowl Judgments.

7. The Fifth Trumpet: the First Woe Judgment—Revelation 9:1-12

And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star from heaven fallen unto the earth: and there was given to him the key of the pit of the abyss. And he opened the pit of the abyss; and there went up a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. And out of the smoke came forth locusts upon the earth; and power was given them, as the scorpions of the earth have power. And it was said unto them that they should not hurt the grass on the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree, but only such men as have not the seal of God on their foreheads. And it was given them that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when it strikes a man. And in those days men shall seek death, and shall in no wise find it; and they shall desire to die, and death flees from them. And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared for war; and upon their heads as it were crowns like unto gold, and their faces were as men's faces. And they had hair as the hair of a woman, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots, of many horses rushing to war. And they have tails like unto scorpions,

> *and stings; and in their tails is their power to hurt men five months. They have over them as king the angel of the abyss: his name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in the Greek tongue he had the name Apollyon. The first Woe is past: behold, there come yet two Woes hereafter.*

The passage begins when a fallen *star* is given the key to *the Abyss* (v. 1). Once again, the word *star* is used symbolically of an angel. Once again, it is a fallen angel. The *Abyss* is a temporary place of confinement for fallen angels or demons. It is the place where the demons feared to be sent when they were cast out by Messiah (Lk. 8:31). It is temporary, for the final abode for fallen angels will be the Lake of Fire. Not all demons are confined in the Abyss at the present time. Those that are, are waiting there to be released for specific judgments on mankind.

When the Abyss is opened by the fallen angel, the third blackout occurs (v. 2), and for the third time there is a total cessation of light from the sun reaching to the earth.

But it is not the blackout that makes the fifth Trumpet Judgment the first Woe Judgment. Out of the Abyss a great number of demons are released for the first of two demonic invasions (v. 3). These demons are commissioned to carry out the fifth Trumpet Judgment (vv. 4-5). They are commanded to refrain from destroying any vegetation and told to *torment* only those who *do not have the seal of God on their foreheads*. So the 144,000 are excluded from any harm in this first demonic invasion (7:3-4). In all likelihood it also includes all believers at that time. Furthermore, these demons are commanded to kill no one, but only to torment men for five months, or 150 days. Generally, John does not reveal the duration of time for each of these judgments, but in this case the timing is given. There will be a limit as to how much destruction these demons will be allowed to render. Unsaved mankind will be open to torment, but not death.

Not only will the demons be unable to kill, but the tormented men will not be able to kill themselves either (v. 6). Because of the tremendous torment inflicted by these demons, men will seek death. They will attempt suicide, but all suicide attempts will fail. Men will be forced to endure the torment in all its fury.

The description of these "locust-scorpions" given in verses 7-10 clearly shows that they are something other than literal scorpions or locusts. Their origin being the Abyss further shows that they are demons. It is not unusual for demons and other angelic beings to have animal-like features.

This was true of the *seraphim* in chapter four.

The description of the first woe ends with the identity of the fallen angel who opened the Abyss. His name in Hebrew is *Abaddon* and in Greek *Apollyon*. Both words mean "destruction."

The five months of torment will eventually come to an end. Although mankind may see some relief, it will be short lived, as verse 12 makes clear:

> *The first Woe is past: behold, there come yet two Woes hereafter.*

8. The Sixth Trumpet: The Second Woe Judgment—Revelation 9:13-21

> *And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the horns of the golden altar which is before God, one saying to the sixth angel that had the trumpet, Loose the four angels that are bound at the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed, that had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, that they should kill the third part of men. And the number of the armies of the horsemen was twice ten thousand times ten thousand: I heard the number of them. And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates as of fire and of hyacinth and of brimstone: and the heads of the horses are as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths proceeded fire and smoke and brimstone. By these three plagues was the third part of men killed, by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone, which proceeded out of their mouths. For the power of the horses is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails are like unto serpents and have heads; and with them they hurt. And the rest of mankind, who were not killed with these plagues, repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and the idols of gold, and of silver, and of brass, and of stone, and of wood; which can neither see, nor hear, nor walk: and they repented not of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.*

With the sounding of the sixth trumpet, four fallen angles bound at the Euphrates River are released, for they are the leaders of the second

demonic invasion (vv. 13-14). While the first demonic invasion was led by one fallen angel, this one is led by four. While the first demonic invasion was able to torment but not to kill, this one is commissioned to kill one-third of the earth's population (v. 15). So the second woe is indeed worse than the first.

The number of demons involved in the second invasion is given as two hundred million (v. 16). Sensationalism has had a field day with this figure, resulting in some fantastic speculation. In order for this speculation to stand, the two hundred million figure must be pulled out of its context. The speculation all rests on current events. Communist China once declared that they can field an army of two hundred million. Without even so much as questioning the truthfulness of this assertion, many have concluded that the two hundred million must involve a Chinese invasion of the Middle East. The context just will not allow for this. In support of a Chinese invasion, the ones who adhere to this theory say that this invasion is led by *the kings of the east* and that the east *must* refer to China. First of all, *the kings of the east* are found in chapter sixteen and are not connected by the text with the two hundred million of chapter nine. The *kings of the east* are part of the Bowl Judgments, and the two hundred million belong to the Trumpet Judgments. So they are not connected in any way. The events are separated by a period of time. Furthermore, the consistency of usage requires identifying the *kings of the east* as referring to Mesopotamian kings rather than to China. Who the *kings of the east* are will be explained in Chapter 14, The Campaign of Armageddon and the Second Coming of Jesus the Messiah. For now, it is sufficient to point out that the *east* in Scripture is always Mesopotamia and never China. This army of two hundred million are demons and not Chinese. The fact that they are led by four fallen angels shows that they are demons rather than humans. Furthermore, the location of the source of this invasion is the Euphrates River, which is not located in China, but in Mesopotamia or ancient Babylonia, a place the Scriptures often connects with demonism.

The announcement of the number in this army is followed by a description of what this army looks like (vv. 17-19). A person would be hard pressed to find just one Chinese person who looks like this, let alone two hundred million of them. The description given of the army clearly rules out their being human and requires that they be demonic. Furthermore, the means by which the destruction of one-third of the world's population

is accomplished (*fire*, *smoke*, *brimstone*), involves the supernatural rather than the natural.

To summarize why these two hundred million are demons and not Chinese, four things should be noted: *first*, they are led by four fallen angels; *second*, the location of the army is stated to be the Euphrates, where Babylon is located (which in the future will be the headquarters of the counterfeit trinity); *third*, the description given in the text rules out this army's being human; and *fourth*, the kings of the east are not connected with this at all.

Another passage describing these two demonic invasions is found in Joel 1:15-2:11:

> *Alas for the day! for the day of Jehovah is at hand, and as destruction from the Almighty shall it come. Is not the food cut off before our eyes, yea, joy and gladness from the house of our God? The seeds rot under their clods; the garners are laid desolate, the barns are broken down; for the grain is withered. How do the beasts groan! the herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture; yea, the flocks of sheep are made desolate. O Jehovah, to you do I cry; for the fire has devoured the pastures of the wilderness, and the flame has burned all the trees of the field. Yea, the beasts of the field pant unto you; for the water brooks are dried up, and the fire has devoured the pastures of the wilderness. Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain; let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of Jehovah comes, for it is nigh at hand; a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, as the dawn spread upon the mountains; a great people and a strong; there has not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after them, even to the years of many generations. A fire devours before them; and behind them a flame burns: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and none has escaped them. The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses; and as horseman, so do they run. Like the noise of chariots on the tops of the mountains do they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devours the stubble, as a strong people set in battle array. At their presence the peoples are in anguish; all faces are waxed pale. They run like mighty men; they*

> *climb the wall like men of war; and they march every one on his ways, and they break not their ranks. Neither does one thrust another; they march every one in his path; and they burst through the weapons, and break not off their course. They leap upon the city; they run upon the wall; they climb up into the houses; they enter in at the windows like a thief. The earth quakes before them; the heavens tremble; the sun and the moon are darkened, and the stars withdraw their shining: and Jehovah utters his voice before his army; for his camp is very great; for he is strong that executes his word; for the day of Jehovah is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?*

Joel begins to portray this demonic invasion by describing the devastation of the Day of Jehovah, or the Tribulation (1:15-20). After announcing its approach (v. 15), he relates the results on the crops (vv. 16-17): little remains either for the Temple (v. 16) or for sustenance (v. 17). This is followed by a description of the devastation of the livestock (vv. 18-20). Joel then proceeds to give an account of the invasion itself (2:1-11). The alarm is sounded (v. 1), announcing the approaching army of demons, giving clear evidence that the Day of Jehovah has arrived with a vengeance. He then describes the Day of Jehovah (v. 2a) as being composed of darkness, gloominess, clouds and thick darkness. As dawn is sudden and spreads around a mountain, so sudden and widespread is this judgment of the Day of Jehovah. It is then that Joel points to the invading army (vv. 2b-9). He describes their approach, which shows their uniqueness (v. 2b) and their devastation (v. 3). What is related here is similar to the Revelation passage, which again points to something other than human. The description of the invading army is presented next (vv. 4-9), giving their appearance (v. 4), noise (v. 5), terror (vv. 5-6), speed (v. 7), discipline (v. 8) and their attack (v. 9). The similarity with Revelation is striking and again points to these invaders as being demons. The results (v.10) of this demonic invasion include convulsions of nature and a total blackout, the third one of the end time. The passage concludes with the reason for the invasion (v. 11): the judgment of God. The text states that the army is great, for there are two hundred million demons, and it is enough for God to execute His word: the destruction of one-third of humanity. It was pointed out in the introduction that one of the purposes of the Revelation was to give the chronological sequence to many of the

Old Testament prophecies. This is just one example.

But even with the sixth Trumpet Judgment, mankind still refuses to repent (Rev. 9:20-21). They continue to worship the same demons which have tormented them for five months and have just destroyed one-third of their number.

The Trumpet Judgments come to an end by the middle of the Tribulation period.

D. The Two Witnesses—Revelation 11:3-6

The fourth event transpiring throughout the first half of the Tribulation is the ministry of the Two Witnesses.

> *And I will give unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees and the two candlesticks, standing before the Lord of the earth. And if any man desires to hurt them, fire proceeded out of their mouth and devours their enemies; and if any man shall desire to hurt them, in this manner must he be killed. These have the power to shut the heaven, that it rain not during the days of their prophecy: and they have power over the waters to turn them into blood, and to smite the earth with every plague, as often as they shall desire.*

In verse three, the *timing* of the ministry is given as 1,260 days, which is the equivalent of 3½ years. These 3½ years cover the first half of the Tribulation period.

Their *identity* is given in verse four, and they are said to be the fulfillment of Zechariah 4:11-14:

> *Then answered I, and said unto him, What are these two olive-trees upon the right side of the candlestick and upon the left side thereof? And I answered the second time, and said unto him, What are these two olive branches, which are beside the two golden spouts, that empty the golden oil out of themselves? And he answered me and said, Know you not what these are? And I said, No, my lord. Then said he, These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.*

These Two Witnesses have been subject to much speculation. Many prophetic teachers try to identify them with two men who have lived in the past. One is always said to be Elijah, while the other is said to be either Moses or Enoch. Those who claim them to be Enoch and Elijah base it on the fact that these two men have never died, and so they will return to die in the Tribulation. Often, Hebrews 9:27 is used as evidence for "it is appointed unto men once to die." But this is a general principle and not an absolute rule. For example, take the word *once*: some people have died twice, namely, all those who had been resurrected in the Old and New Testaments apart from Messiah. Furthermore, what about the living Church saints? If indeed Hebrews 9:27 is an absolute rule, it would mean that all living Church saints at the Rapture will also have to die at some time. Both I Corinthians 15:51 and I Thessalonians 4:15-17 show that Hebrews 9:27 is only a general principle. Also in the light of Hebrews 11:5, it cannot be that Enoch will die in the future:

> *By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and he was not found, because God translated him: for he has had witness borne to him that before his translation he had been well-pleasing unto God.*

Enoch is clearly said to have been *translated*, and this involves corruption putting on incorruption and mortality putting on immortality (I Cor. 15:50-58). Since Elijah has already been taken into Heaven, the same is true of him, for no man in his physical state can enter Heaven (I Cor. 15:50). This means that neither Elijah nor Enoch can die, for they are now immortal.

Those who wish to make them Elijah and Moses fall back on the fact that these were the two who appeared with Messiah at the Transfiguration. But this is very flimsy evidence and hardly shows a cause and effect relationship. Others say it is because these men had unfinished ministries, and they will return to finish them at this time. This is a very subjective judgment, and many from the Old Testament could be nominated for the same reason. The fact that the miracles performed by the Two Witnesses are similar to those of Moses and Elijah is hardly sufficient evidence, for God can use others to perform these same miracles.

It is best to take these men to be two Jewish prophets whom God will raise up during the Tribulation itself. They are purely future persons and not two men from the past. The Scriptures clearly teach that Elijah is to return

before the Tribulation and will conduct a ministry during the Tribulation. But there is no scriptural warrant to make Elijah one of the Two Witnesses. The Two Witnesses will simply be two Jewish men living in that time whom God will elevate to the office of prophet and will endow with miraculous powers. Their exact identity, then, awaits the Tribulation.

In verses 5-6, the *character* of their ministry and their authority is described. They have the power to kill men by fire, which will be used against those seeking to kill them before their proper time has come (v. 5). They also have authority to cause drought by withholding rain, to turn water into blood, and to cause other plagues (v. 6), perhaps similar to the ten that fell on Egypt (for the turning water into blood was one of them).

The center of their ministry will be the City of Jerusalem, whereas that of the 144,000 Jews will be worldwide. More will be said about the Two Witnesses in the next chapter.

E. The Ecclesiastical Babylon— Revelation 17:1-6

> *And there came one of the seven angels that had the seven bowls, and spake with me, saying, Come hither, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot that sits upon many waters; with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and they that dwell in the earth were made drunken with the wine of her fornication. And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness: and I saw a woman sitting upon a scarlet-colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stone and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations, even the unclean things of her fornication, and upon her forehead a name written,* ***mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of the Harlots and of the Abominations of the Earth****. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I wondered with a great wonder.*

The fifth event that occurs throughout the first half of the Tribulation is the rule of the Ecclesiastical Babylon.

Just as there will be two political systems during the Tribulation, one during the first half (the ten kings) and one during the second half (the Antichrist), there will also be two religious systems, one for each half of the Tribulation. This passage describes the religious system of the first half of the Tribulation.

In verses 1-2, John is invited to come and to view the judgment about to fall on the *Great Harlot.* To prostitute something is to take that which has a proper use and to turn it into an improper use. A prostitute takes sex, which has a proper use, and perverts it with an improper use, turning it into something illicit, causing fornication. In this case, the harlot represents "religion," which has a proper use (Jas. 1:26-27), but here has been prostituted for improper use. Rather than serving, it rules. The false use of religion causes spiritual fornication. The word *fornication* is used both of physical unfaithfulness and also of spiritual unfaithfulness, as in Hosea 1-2; Jeremiah 2:20; 3:1-9; Ezekiel 16:15-41; 23:5-44, etc. It is with this woman that the kings of the earth commit fornication (v. 2), showing this to be a unity of religion and state. The woman is sitting upon many waters (v. 1), which is interpreted in verse 15 to refer to the world population:

> *And he says unto me, The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.*

In verse three, the harlot is seen to be sitting on the seven-headed and ten-horned beast. This means that this false religious system does have the support of civil government during the first half of the Tribulation and is able to rule because of government support.[4]

The description and identification of this woman is given in verses 4-5. The woman is seen as being very wealthy and influential, and her full name is *Mystery, Babylon the Great, The Mother of the Harlots, and of the Abominations of the Earth.* What is found in these verses is the final form of religious apostasy, ending in a one-world super-church. It is the final form of the woman Jezebel cast into the Great Tribulation (Rev. 2:20-22) and united with the apostate Laodicean Church. This is the counterfeit bride of messiah, presented as a prostitute, in contrast with

[4] See Chapter 2, The Times of the Gentiles.

the true Bride of Messiah, presented as a pure virgin (II Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:25-27; Rev. 19:6-8).

Babylon the Harlot represents the one-world religious system that rules over the religious affairs during the first half of the Tribulation. She rules over the nations of the world (the *many waters*), fully controlling the religious affairs, and has the reluctant support of the government. The headquarters of this one-world religion will be the rebuilt city of Babylon, the *mother* of idolatry, for it was here that idolatry and false religion began (Gen. 11:1-9).

In verse six, the woman is drunk with the blood of those who suffered martyrdom for Messiah. This answers the question as to who was killing and hurting the fifth seal saints: the false super-church. The myriads of Gentiles who are saved under the ministry of the 144,000 Jews will suffer persecution by the Ecclesiastical Babylon, and many will be martyred.

Summary

These, then, are the events of the first half of the Tribulation. Some are sequential, with one following the other in chronological sequence. Included in these are the Seal and Trumpet Judgments.

There are also five events that transpire throughout the first half of the Tribulation. They are: *First,* the ministry of Elijah; *second*, the 144,000 Jews and the worldwide revival; *third,* the ministry of the Two Witnesses; *fourth*, the political system of the ten kings; and *fifth, the religious system of the Ecclesiastical Babylon.*

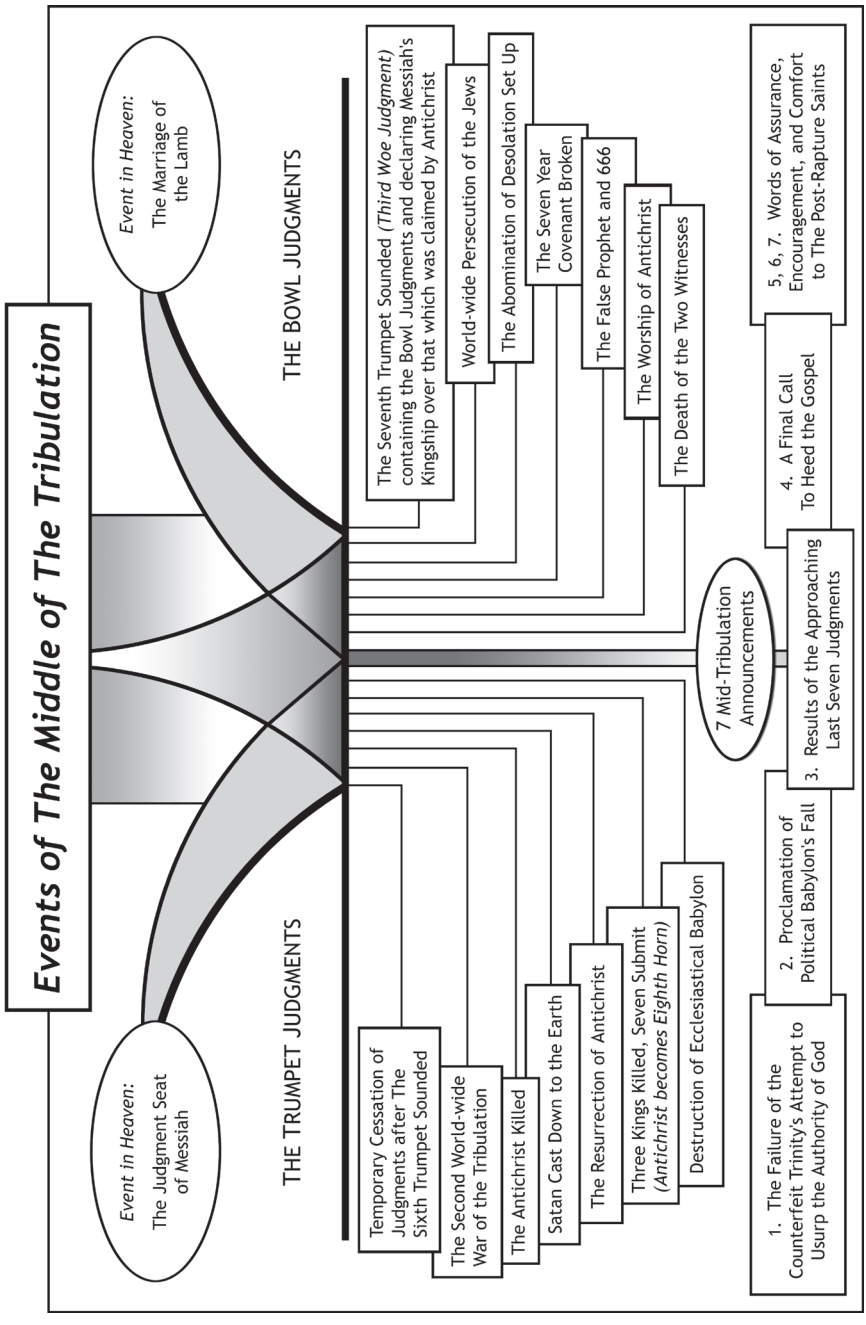

Events of The Middle of The Tribulation
Event in Heaven: The Judgment Seat of Messiah
Event in Heaven: The Marriage of the Lamb
THE TRUMPET JUDGMENTS
THE BOWL JUDGMENTS
Temporary Cessation of Judgments after The Sixth Trumpet Sounded
The Second World-wide War of the Tribulation
The Antichrist Killed
Satan Cast Down to the Earth
The Resurrection of Antichrist
Three Kings Killed, Seven Submit (Antichrist becomes Eighth Horn)
Destruction of Ecclesiastical Babylon
The Seventh Trumpet Sounded (Third Woe Judgment) containing the Bowl Judgments and declaring Messiah's Kingship over that which was claimed by Antichrist
World-wide Persecution of the Jews
The Abomination of Desolation Set Up
The Seven Year Covenant Broken
The False Prophet and 666
The Worship of Antichrist
The Death of the Two Witnesses
7 Mid-Tribulation Announcements
1. The Failure of the Counterfeit Trinity's Attempt to Usurp the Authority of God
2. Proclamation of Political Babylon's Fall
3. Results of the Approaching Last Seven Judgments
4. A Final Call To Heed the Gospel
5, 6, 7. Words of Assurance, Encouragement, and Comfort to The Post-Rapture Saints

Chart #5

ELEVEN

The Events of the Middle of the Tribulation

The sixth Trumpet Judgment concludes at the time of the middle of the Tribulation and is followed by a temporary cessation of the judgments poured out of Heaven. The Tribulation enters into the temporary proverbial eye of the hurricane. But it does not mean that the earth will be at peace. The nations will be in turmoil as the Antichrist proceeds to take over the political, economic and religious control of the entire world.

So many things happen at this point that it is difficult to put them in sequential order with any certainty. The following layout is more of a logical order, for the events may not necessarily come in this sequence. That all of the events listed in this chapter occur in the middle of the Tribulation is certain. What is uncertain is whether or not they all come in this particular sequence. In the Book of Revelation, the events of the middle of the Tribulation comprise chapters 10-14 and chapter 17.

A. The Little Book—Revelation 10:1-11

And I saw another strong angel coming down out of heaven, arrayed with a cloud; and the rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire; and he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left upon the earth; and he cried with a great voice, as a lion roars: and when he cried, the seven thunders uttered their voices. And when the seven thunders uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying, Seal up the things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not. And the angel that I saw standing upon the sea and

> *upon the earth lifted up his right hand to heaven, and swore by him that lives for ever and ever, who created the heaven and the things that are therein, and the earth and the things that are therein, and the sea and the things that are therein, that there shall be delay no longer: but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, then is finished the mystery of God, according to the good tidings which he declared to his servants the prophets. And the voice which I heard from heaven, I heard it again speaking with me, and saying, Go, take the book which is open in the hand of the angel that stands upon the sea an upon the earth. And I went unto the angel, saying unto him that he should give me the little book. And he says unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make your belly bitter, but in your mouth it shall be sweet as honey. And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and when I had eaten it, my belly was made bitter. And they say unto me, You must prophesy again over many peoples and nations and tongues and kings.*

The temporary suspension of the judgments from Heaven begins after the sixth Trumpet Judgment with the story of the Little Book. John saw a strong angel carrying a little book or scroll (vv. 1-2). This is the second scroll mentioned in Revelation. The first was the Seven-Sealed Scroll or book that contained the Seven Seal and the Seven Trumpet Judgments which described the events of the first half of the Tribulation. Now, a second scroll comes into the picture, the content of which will shortly be revealed.

The strong angel cried a great shout, after which the Seven Thunders uttered something that John is forbidden to reveal (vv. 3-4).

Up to this point, six of the seven trumpets have sounded, so there is yet one more remaining. The results of the seventh trumpet are now announced by the strong angel (vv. 5-7). In the days of the seventh angel, the judgments of God will be completed. Just as the seventh Seal Judgment contained the Seven Trumpet Judgments, the seventh Trumpet Judgment will contain the seven Bowl Judgments, which will finish the judgments of God declared by the prophets. All the prophecies dealing with the Tribulation's second half will then be fulfilled. That the seventh trumpet will not be an all-at-once judgment but a process

is evident from the statement, *in the days of the voice of the seventh angel is the mystery of God finished*. The plural number shows that a time period is involved. The Bowl Judgments all come toward the end of the Tribulation and with them *the mystery*[1] *of God is finished*. The seventh trumpet that contains the seven Bowl Judgments is the third woe. For this reason, it is the worst of all. The Little Book contains all the information regarding the seventh trumpet with the Bowl Judgments, as found in Revelation 15-16.

Attention is focused on the Little Book in verses 8-10. John was commanded to eat the book. In his mouth the taste was as sweet as honey, but it became bitter in the belly. The clue to the meaning of this symbolic act is found in verse 11, which states what the content of the book is:

> *And they say unto me, You must prophesy again over many peoples and nations and tongues and kings.*

The content of the Little Book is prophecy, especially the prophecy of the middle and the second half of the Tribulation. This gives the clue to the meaning of verses 8-10. To almost all people, prophecy is sweet. Prophetic conferences draw larger audiences than virtually any other kind of conference. The voluminous sale of the more sensational prophecy books is another evidence of how "sweet" Bible prophecy has become to so many people. But if "sweetness" is all there is, then it is worth little. Every student of prophecy should have the second experience that John had: bitterness in the stomach. A knowledge of things to come should give every believer a burden for people. For the way of escape from these things is the Rapture, and the requirement to qualify for the Rapture is acceptance of Messiah now. A true student of prophecy will not simply stop with the knowledge of things to come. Rather, this knowledge will create the strong burden to preach the gospel to others and thereby give them a way of escape.

Thus, Revelation ten introduces the reader to the events of the middle of the Tribulation.

---

[1] See Appendix VI, The Eight Mysteries of the New Testament.

B. The Second Worldwide Conflict—Daniel 11:40-45

Whatever kind of peace may have existed between the Antichrist and the ten kings ruling the Ten Kingdoms of the world is now shattered as the Antichrist begins his move to take political control of the world. Thus, the second worldwide conflict of the Tribulation begins with the Antichrist's declaring war on the ten kings.

> *And at the time of the end shall the king of the south contend with him; and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass through. He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown; but these shall be delivered out of his hand: Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon. He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries; and the land of Egypt shall not escape. But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt; and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps. But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him; and he shall go forth with great fury to destroy and utterly to sweep away many. And he shall plant the tents of his palace between the sea and the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.*

In his war against the ten kings, the Antichrist moves out in all directions in conquest. He is seen moving against the north (vv. 40, 44), the south (vv. 40, 42-43), and the east (v. 44). The three kings he will succeed in killing (Dan. 7:8, 20, 24) will be the king of the north (Syria), the king of the south (Egypt) and the king of the east (Mesopotamia). His conquest of Egypt opens the door for his conquest of Africa (vv. 42-43). He will also invade Israel, *the glorious land* (v. 41 and also mentioned in Rev. 11:1-2), setting the stage for the Abomination of Desolation, to be discussed later in this chapter.

Although eventually the Antichrist will gain political control of the whole world, three countries will escape his domination: Edom, Moab, and Ammon (v. 41). All of these three ancient nations are under one government today: the Kingdom of Jordan. Why Jordan escapes the

domination will be explained in Chapter 13, The Great Tribulation: Added Features and Facts.

In verse 45, Daniel states where the Antichrist will plant his headquarters during this Midtribulation war. A more accurate translation of this verse would be:

> *He shall plant the tents of his palace between the seas at the glorious holy mountain.*

The word for *tent* refers to a military tent of a general, and the word for *palace* to a royal tent. It is a royal tent of a military general (the Antichrist) that is set up. It is set up *between the seas*, meaning between the Mediterranean Sea and the Dead Sea. Furthermore, it is *at the glorious holy mountain*, meaning the Temple Mount, or Mount Moriah or Mount Zion. This will set the stage for several events to be discussed later in this chapter.

C. *The Antichrist Killed*

It is apparently during this conflict that the Antichrist is killed. Daniel 11:45b states:

> *Yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.*

In Revelation 13:3 the death of the Antichrist is stated as:

> *And I saw one of his heads as though it had been smitten unto death; and his death-stroke was healed: and the whole earth wondered after the beast; . . .*

The seventh head, which is the Antichrist,[2] is smitten unto death. The phrase, *as though it had been smitten unto death*, does not simply mean apparent death, for it is also used of Messiah in Revelation 5:6. This is simply an idiom for a resurrected individual and real death is involved.

So in the course of this conflict between the Antichrist and the other ten kings, the Antichrist is killed.

---

[2] See Chapter 2, The Times of the Gentiles.

D. Satan Cast Down to the Earth—Revelation 12:7-12

At this point of time Satan is cast down out of his third abode[3] in the atmospheric heavens to his fourth abode, the earth.

> *And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels going forth to war with the dragon; and the dragon warred and his angels; and they prevailed not, neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast down, the old serpent, he that is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world; he was cast down to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him. And I heard a great voice in heaven, saying, Now is come the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, who accuses them before our God day and night. And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb, and because of the word of their testimony; and they loved not their life even unto death. Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe for the earth and for the sea: because the devil is gone down unto you, having great wrath, knowing that he had but a short time.*

In the middle of the Tribulation, while war breaks out on earth between the Antichrist and the ten kings, war also breaks out in the atmospheric heavens, which is Satan's third abode (v. 7). The conflict is between the Archangel Michael and his forces and the archenemy Satan and his forces. Michael is victorious, and Satan and his cohorts are cast out of the atmospheric heavens and confined to the earth, which now becomes Satan's fourth abode (vv. 8-9). Five names are given to Satan, all describing his person and his work. In the *great dragon*, his fierceness and ferociousness is seen. The *old serpent* points back to the Garden of Eden where, due to his temptation, man fell, bringing sin and death into human experience. The Great Tribulation is a judgment of man's sin. In the word *devil*, Satan is viewed as the accuser of all of God's children. *Satan* means adversary, and in this he is seen as the opponent to God's program. As

[3] See Appendix I, The Six Abodes of Satan.

the *deceiver*, he is pointed out as the great master counterfeiter who attempts to deceive elect and non-elect alike.

Satan's confinement to the earth brings two results. *First*: Satan's access to Heaven is removed, and he will no longer be able to stand before the Throne of God and be the accuser of the brethren. For this there is rejoicing in Heaven (vv. 10-12a). *Second*: Satan is now full of wrath (v. 12b). His anger is due to the fact that he knows his time is short, namely, 3½ years. Because of Satan's wrath, it is *woe for the earth*. This is a very important point to note in the understanding of what is happening during the middle and second half of the Tribulation. The full meaning will become apparent later in this study.

E. The Resurrection of the Antichrist—Revelation 13:3

> *And I saw one of his heads as though it had been smitten unto death; and his death-stroke was healed: and the whole earth wondered after the beast.*

As the rest of Revelation 12 makes clear, Satan then sets out on a course to destroy the Jews. The means by which he will attempt to accomplish this will be the two beasts of Revelation 13. The details of both chapters will be dealt with as this study continues. But he will begin on this course by bringing the Antichrist back to life.

Verses 1-2 of chapter 13 have been explained earlier,[4] but it is now clear that it is Satan who will resurrect the Antichrist back to life. Many take the phrase, *as though he had been smitten unto death*, to mean that the Antichrist appeared to be dead but was not really. However, the same idiom is used of Messiah in Revelation 5:6, and there was no question that Messiah died. The idiom, then, refers to a resurrected individual. The person was killed and by all human experience should have remained dead. But suddenly he is very much alive because of resurrection. This idiom must mean here what it means elsewhere: a reference to a resurrected individual. The text clearly goes on to say that *his death-stroke was healed*, that is, by resurrection.

---

[4] See Chapter 2, The Times of the Gentiles.

Some wish to interpret this as a reference to the revival of the Roman Empire, feeling that this would be enough to cause man to worship it. But a revived Roman Empire would not cause man to worship it as God any more than the revival of Poland or Israel did. This kind of thinking is purely imaginary. It is the resurrection of the man Antichrist which creates this worship.

Thus, the Antichrist is the counterfeit son in every respect. There has been a counterfeit multiplicity of names, a counterfeit virgin birth, a counterfeit god-man, and now a counterfeit death and resurrection. A counterfeit second coming to rule the world can be seen as he will move to possess the nations and kingdoms of the world. Satan is playing the part of the counterfeit father in this scenario. For as the True Father gave His authority to the True Son, so the counterfeit father will give his authority to the counterfeit son.

F. Three Kings Killed—Seven Submit

The attempt of the Antichrist to gain political control will be interrupted by his death. But after his resurrection, the second world war of the Tribulation will continue until three of the ten kings are killed. The text dealing with this has already been examined, and it is found in Daniel 7:24:

> *And as for the ten horns, out of this kingdom shall ten kings arise: and another shall arise after them; and he shall be diverse from the former, and he shall put down three kings.*

Once three of the ten are killed, the others submit to his authority. This is stated in Revelation 17:12-13:

> *And the ten horns that you saw are ten kings, who have received no kingdom as yet; but they receive authority as kings, with the beast, for one hour. These have one mind, and they give their power and authority unto the beast.*

The ten horns of the beast are the ten kings (v. 12), but they eventually relinquish their power and authority to the Antichrist. The same point is made in verse 17:

> *For God did put in their hearts to do his mind, and to come*

to one mind, and to give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God should be accomplished.

The other kings will all come to *one mind*, which is *to give their kingdom unto the beast*. With this submission, the Antichrist will succeed in taking over the political control of the entire world, with the exception of Jordan. The second political system of the Tribulation will be initiated at this point. The Antichrist's next goal will be to gain world religious control. To accomplish this, he must try to remove all religious opposition. This includes the Ecclesiastical Babylon, the Two Witnesses, and the Jews.

G. Destruction of Ecclesiastical Babylon—Revelation 17:16

And the ten horns which you saw, and the beast, these shall hate the harlot, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and shall burn her utterly with fire.

One of the Antichrist's first acts in gaining religious control will be the destruction of the first religious system of the Tribulation, the Ecclesiastical Babylon. Previously, this religious system had the support of the civil government, for the first 3½ years. With all civil authority turned over to the hands of the Antichrist, who is now in full control, civil government itself will destroy the domination of the Ecclesiastical Babylon.

H. The Death of the Two Witnesses—Revelation 11:7-13

And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up out of the abyss shall make war with them, and overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified. And

> *from among the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations do men look upon their dead bodies three days and a half, and suffer not their dead bodies to be laid in a tomb. And they that dwell on the earth rejoice over them, and make merry; and they shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwell on the earth. And after the three days and a half the breath of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them that beheld them. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they went up into heaven in the cloud; and their enemies beheld them. And in that hour there was a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell; and there were killed in the earthquake seven thousand persons: and the rest were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.*

In order to gain further religious allegiance of the world masses, the Antichrist will also move against the Two Witnesses who, because of their supernatural abilities, caused so much havoc for the inhabitants of the earth during the first half of the Tribulation.

The Antichrist will war against the Two Witnesses and will succeed in killing them (v. 7). That this incident will happen after his resurrection from the dead is clear from the statement, *the beast that comes up out of the abyss*, and he will come back from the Abyss by means of his resurrection by Satan. Along with his resurrection, the act of killing the Two Witnesses will provide another reason why mankind will worship him. All previous attempts to kill the Two Witnesses fail because of the miraculous powers of the Two Witnesses which kill those who attempt to murder them. But now their ministry is over, and God allows the Antichrist to have the power over them and to kill them. This power of the Antichrist over the Two Witnesses, when all others failed, will be another reason why mankind will give its allegiance to the Antichrist.

Perhaps in order to display the new power, the Antichrist will not allow the bodies to be buried. They will lie where they die in the streets of Jerusalem for all to see (vv. 8-9). The fact that the *whole* world is able to view the bodies indicates that such things would be possible future to John's day. Through modern technology this is no longer impossible to believe and has silenced many a former critic of the Scriptures. The bodies will lie in the streets of Jerusalem unburied for 3½ days.

During the time that the bodies lie in the streets, the inhabitants of the earth will rejoice over the death of the Two Witnesses because of the plagues they suffered via the Two Witnesses (v. 10). The rejoicing extends to the point that they will give gifts to one another in an outward display of joy over the death of the Two Witnesses.

The rejoicing will cease suddenly. After 3½ days, the Two Witnesses will be resurrected and taken to Heaven in the sight of all (vv. 11-12). Suddenly fear will fall on all as they are able to observe the ascension of the Two Witnesses into Heaven.

Jerusalem, where the murder will take place and where the bodies will be displayed, will receive sudden judgment (v. 13). Jerusalem will suffer an earthquake that will destroy one-tenth of the city, killing 7,000 inhabitants. While the Gentiles will begin to worship the Antichrist, the Jewish inhabitants of Jerusalem will give the glory to the God of Heaven. The salvation of the Jews of Jerusalem in the middle of the Tribulation will eventually lead to the saving of "all Israel" at the end of the Tribulation.

I. The Worship of the Antichrist—Revelation 13:3-10

And I saw one of his heads as though it had been smitten unto death; and his death-stroke was healed: and the whole earth wondered after the beast; and they worshipped the dragon, because he gave his authority unto the beast; and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? and who is able to war with him? and there was given to him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and there was given to him authority to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth for blasphemies against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, even them that dwell in the heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and there was given to him authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation. And all that dwell on the earth shall worship him, every one whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb that

> *has been slain. If any man has an ear, let him hear. If any man is for captivity, into captivity he goes: if any man shall kill with the sword, with the sword must he be killed. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.*

The world will see the counterfeit resurrection of the Antichrist from the dead and his power over the Two Witnesses who had tormented the unbelievers for the first 3½ years. Although the Two Witnesses will be resurrected, they will disappear from view and will no longer be heard from. The inhabitants of the earth will begin to worship the Antichrist as the king of the world and as god.

As has been shown in Chapter 2, The Times of the Gentiles, the seventh head is the Antichrist Stage and this is the head that is *smitten unto death*, but *the death-stroke was healed* by means of resurrection (v. 3). Because he will give his authority to the Antichrist, men will begin worshiping Satan. Thus, Satan will become a counterfeit god the father. As the Father gave His authority to the True Son, Satan will give his authority to the counterfeit son. Just as the Father is worshipped through the True Son, Satan is to be worshipped through the counterfeit son (v. 4). And so men will worship him and will give him supreme glory by saying, *who is like unto the beast?* And *who is able to withstand him?* It should be noted that the worship is coming from the whole earth (v. 3) and not just from Europe.

In verses 5-7a, the activities of this pseudo-god are related. He will *speak great things and blasphemies* (v. 5a), declare himself to be god, and call men to begin worshiping him. He will be given *authority to continue for 42 months* (v. 5b) which is equivalent to 3½ years, and so his control is to extend throughout the second half of the Tribulation. He will blaspheme against all that is in Heaven, both God and all those who are there (v. 6). He will war against the saints and *overcome them* (v. 7a), as is evident from his murder of the Two Witnesses, and he will continue to persecute all believers in Messiah. He will also hold political authority over the earth, for he will be given *authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation*. This verse also makes it impossible to limit this to Europe alone. What is stated in verses 5-7 is also found in Daniel 7:25.

At this point in time he will not only have political authority over the whole world (v. 7b), but he will also have religious authority over all the earth (v. 8), and *all* unbelievers will worship him that have not had their names written in the *Lamb's Book of Life*.

In light of all this, a warning is given (vv. 9-10). The very way that men will treat the saints, God will treat them. If they enslave the saints, they will find themselves enslaved. If they kill the saints, they will be killed. This is a word of patience to the saints. It is a word of comfort to believers living in this period of persecution. They will understand that whatever suffering they undergo, God will in turn judge those perpetrating the persecution in the same way.

J. The False Prophet—Revelation 13:11-15

> *And I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like unto a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon. And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his sight. And he makes the earth and them that dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose death-stroke was healed. And he does great signs, that he should even make fire to come down out of heaven upon the earth in the sight of men. And he deceives them that dwell on the earth by reason of the signs which it was given him to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast who has the stroke of the sword and lived. And it was given unto him to give breath to it, even to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as should not worship the image of the beast should be killed.*

In the previous section the rise of the counterfeit father and the counterfeit son was dealt with. To complete the counterfeit trinity, the passages contain a description of the rise of the counterfeit holy spirit in the person of the False Prophet.

Following the rise of the first beast, the Antichrist, John saw a second beast come *out of the earth* (as over against Heaven), thus emphasizing his humanity. He will appear like *a lamb*, giving the appearance of a

true religious character, and thus deceive many. But he will speak like *a dragon* and so will betray his true nature, for he will be an agent of Satan, who throughout the book is portrayed as a dragon. This second beast is elsewhere called the False Prophet (16:13; 19:20; 20:10).

His activities as the counterfeit holy spirit are now spelled out (vv. 12-15). As the Holy Spirit exercises equal authority with the True Son, the False Prophet will exercise equal authority with the counterfeit son (v. 12a). Just as the Holy Spirit calls all men to worship the resurrected Son, the False Prophet will call all men to worship the resurrected counterfeit son *whose death-stroke was healed* (v. 12b). In order to fully carry out the deception, the False Prophet will have the power of the counterfeit spiritual gifts of miracles and will perform signs for the purpose of deception (vv. 13-14a). After convincing the world of the supremacy of the Antichrist, he will command men to make an image of the Beast. After the image is made, it will be given life by the False Prophet. This power of giving life will be another factor why men will worship the Antichrist and the image, and those who refuse to do so are put to death (vv. 14b-15).

In this manner, the counterfeit trinity will be complete.

K. 666: The Mark of the Beast—Revelation 13:16-18

> *And he causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free and the bond, that there be given them a mark on their right hand, or upon their forehead; and that no man should be able to buy or sell, save he that has the mark, even the name of the beast or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. He that has understanding, let him count the number of the beast; for it is the number of a man: and his number is Six hundred and sixty and six.*

To counterfeit the seal of God on the foreheads of the saints, the seal of the Holy Spirit, the False Prophet will introduce his own counterfeit mark or seal. The counterfeit seal is the famous *mark of the beast*.

The placing of the mark will be on the forehead or on the right hand (v. 16). It will be given to all who will subject themselves to the authority of the Antichrist and accept him as god. The mark will serve

as a passport for business (v. 17a). They will be able to neither buy nor sell anything unless they have the mark. It should be pointed out that this mark has nothing to do with credit, as is often taught today. In a credit system, everyone must have a different number. In this case, everyone has the *same* number. The purpose of the mark will be to serve as a sign of identification of those who will own the Antichrist as their god. Only those who have this number will be permitted to work, to buy, to sell, or simply to make a living. The verse does not speak of credit cards, banking systems, a cashless society, a one-world money system, or computers, etc.

The interpretation of the mark is given by five clues (vv. 17b-18):

The name of the Beast;
The number of his name;
The number of the Beast;
The number of a man;
The number is 666.

Following through this logical progression, the number of the Beast is also the number of a man because the Antichrist will be a man who will be the last ruler of the final form of the Fourth Gentile Empire. Furthermore, this number is the number of his very own name, and the numerical value of his name is 666. The point is essentially this: whatever the name of the Antichrist will be in Hebrew, the numerical value of that name will be 666. Each letter of the Hebrew alphabet has a numerical value. There are 22 letters in the Hebrew alphabet and in the order of numerical value they are as follows: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, 100, 200, 300, and 400. So everyone's name in Hebrew has a numerical value. The numerical value of the author's name is 966. The name of Jesus the Messiah has the numerical value of 749. In this passage, whatever the personal name of the Antichrist will be, if his name is spelled out in Hebrew characters, the numerical value of his name will be 666. So this is the number that will be put on the worshipers of the Antichrist. Since a number of different calculations can equal 666, it is impossible to figure the name out in advance. But when he does appear, whatever his personal name will be, it will equal 666. Those who are wise (v. 18) at that time will be able to point him out.

L. The Seven-Year Covenant Broken

Another event occurring at the halfway point of the Tribulation is the breaking of the Seven-Year Covenant made 3½ years earlier. In the context of the Daniel 11:40-45 passage dealt with earlier, it was stated in verse 41: *He shall enter also into the glorious land.* This involves the Antichrist's invasion of Israel, requiring a breaking of the covenant.

In the Isaiah 28:14-22 passage studied in Chapter 9, The Beginning of the Tribulation, verse 18 stated that the covenant will be annulled:

> *And your covenant with death shall be annulled, and your agreement with Sheol shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it.*

Other passages dealing with the breaking of the Seven-Year Covenant are connected with corollary events to be discussed next.

M. The Abomination of Desolation

The first corollary event tied in with the breaking of the covenant is the Abomination of Desolation in connection with the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem. These three elements are all related together in Daniel 9:27:

> *And he shall make a firm covenant with many for one week: and in the middle of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease; and upon the wing of abominations shall come one that makes desolate; and even unto the full end, and that determined, shall wrath be poured out upon the desolate.*

When discussing this key passage in Chapter 9, The Beginning of the Tribulation, it was stated that the signing of the Seven-Year Covenant will begin the Tribulation. This verse reveals just how long the Tribulation will last: a total of seven years. But now it goes on to say that *in the middle of the week*, that is, in the middle of the seven-year period, the Antichrist will cause a cessation of the sacrificial system that had

been reinstituted. This forced cessation is followed by the statement, *upon the wing of abomination shall come one that makes desolate*. Thus, the cessation of the sacrifices in conjunction with the breaking of the covenant is followed by an act (or acts) which is labeled as "the abomination of desolation." The exact nature of this act (or acts) is not spelled out at this stage. Exactly what the Abomination of Desolation consists of is not stated, only that it occurs in the middle of the Tribulation. However, the term *wing* refers to the pinnacle of the Temple, emphasizing the concept of an "overspreading influence." What begins here will spread elsewhere. The term *abomination* often refers to an image or an idol.

Another passage, Daniel 12:11, gives the duration of time that the Abomination of Desolation will last:

> *And from the time that the continual burnt-offering shall be taken away, and the abomination that makes desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.*

As in Daniel 9:27, the starting point is the cessation of the sacrificial system. According to this passage, the Abomination of Desolation will last a total of 1,290 days. This is a full thirty days beyond the end of the Tribulation. No reason is given as to why it is permitted to last this extra thirty days. Again, this passage does not reveal exactly what the Abomination of Desolation will be. But, as in Daniel 9:27, the term *abomination* refers to an image or an idol.

This event is also mentioned in Matthew 24:15-16:

> *When therefore ye see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let him that reads understand), then let them that are in Judaea flee unto the mountains.*

This passage is merely a reminder of the Daniel prophecy, with no explanation as to what the Abomination of Desolation is. The only clue given is that it will be something *standing* (like an image or idol) in the Holy Place. This passage helps to verify the futuristic interpretation of the Daniel passage, for it was still considered unfulfilled and future at the time of Messiah. The Abomination of Desolation will serve as a warning to the Jews of Israel to flee the Land.

Another text dealing with this is in Revelation 11:1-2:

> *And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and one said, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. And the court which is without the temple leave without, and measure it not; for it has been given unto the nations: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.*

This passage also deals with the takeover of the Temple, as well as the City of Jerusalem (at least the Old City), and connects it with the Times of the Gentiles. This will be the final Gentile control of Jerusalem, and it will last 42 months, or 3½ years. It will be this Gentile takeover of the city and the Temple that will cause a cessation of the sacrifices. Although Gentile domination over the City of Jerusalem will last 3½ years, the Abomination of Desolation will continue an extra month. But there is still no clear explanation as to what the Abomination of Desolation is.

What, then, is the Abomination of Desolation? There are two elements or stages involved, the first of which is in II Thessalonians 2:3-4:

> *Let no man beguile you in any wise: for it will not be, except the falling away come first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, he that opposes and exalts himself against all that is called God or that is worshipped; so that he sits in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God.*

In this passage, the Antichrist is described as seating himself in the Temple of God, declaring to the world that he really is God. In all probability, he will sit in the very Holy of Holies. Thus, with his initial takeover of Jerusalem in general and the Temple in particular, he will seat himself in the very Temple of God, will claim to be god, and, by so doing, will set up the second religious system of the Tribulation: the worship of the Antichrist.

His self-declaration of deity will be accompanied with miraculous signs to carry out the work of deception, according to II Thessalonians 2:8-12:

> *And then shall be revealed the lawless one, whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his mouth, and bring to nought by the manifestation of his coming: even he, whose*

> *coming is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceit of unrighteousness for them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God sends them a working of error, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*

His coming is said to be "energized" by Satan, for it is by Satan that he will be brought back to life. His post-resurrection rise to power will be with *all power and signs and lying wonders*. The aim of these counterfeit miracles, according to verses 10-12, will be to deceive men so that they will worship the Antichrist and accept him as god. These verses have often been interpreted as teaching that if one hears the gospel before the Rapture and rejects it, he will not have an opportunity to be saved after the Rapture. But this is not the teaching of this passage. The point of no return is the acceptance of the "big lie" of the Antichrist's self-proclaimed deity and the submission to the worship of him by means of taking the mark of the Beast. It is only then that the point of no return is actually reached. The option of taking the mark of the Beast only begins in the middle of the Tribulation. Even the context of this passage shows that it speaks of events that occur in the middle of the Tribulation. The worshipers of the Antichrist do so because they are deceived by the Antichrist's power of miracles. They are deceived because *they received not the love of the truth*. The rejection of the gospel was not what they may have heard before the Rapture, but rather the preaching of the 144,000 Jews and the Two Witnesses.

Though he will declare his deity within the Holy of Holies of the Temple, the Antichrist will not set up his throne there, but in Babylon. The Abomination of Desolation is to last a total of 1,290 days, while the Antichrist himself is allowed to continue 1,260 days. Hence, the Abomination of Desolation must include something more than merely the Antichrist's self-proclamation of deity. Furthermore, the Daniel and Matthew passages implied an image or idol that would be erected in the Temple.

The second aspect of the Abomination of Desolation is in Revelation 13:11-15:

> *And I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like unto a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his sight. And he makes the earth and them that dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose death-stroke was healed. And he does great signs, that he should even make fire to come down out of heaven upon the earth in the sight of men. And he deceives them that dwell on the earth by reason of the signs which it was given him to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast who had the stroke of the sword and lived. And it was given unto him to give breath to it, even to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as should not worship the image of the beast should be killed.*

In the second stage of the Abomination of Desolation, the False Prophet will be given authority to perform many signs and wonders (v. 13), deceiving mankind in order to cause them to worship the Antichrist (v. 12). These same ideas were evident in II Thessalonians 2:8-12, and both help clarify what the Abomination of Desolation involves. The great deception is climaxed when the image of the Antichrist becomes alive and men are called upon to worship the image (vv. 14-15). So the deification of the Antichrist continues. The image will be set up in the Holy of Holies to carry on the Abomination of Desolation. Jerusalem will become the religious capitol of the Antichrist, and the Temple will be the center of the worship of the Antichrist, where the living image will be standing. So while the Antichrist will be disposed of after 1,260 days, the image will remain in the Temple another thirty days beyond that. Then it, too, will be disposed of.

Thus, the two stages of the Abomination of Desolation, lasting a total of 1,290 days will be the declaration of deity by the Antichrist in the Holy of Holies followed by the setting up of his image in the same place.

N. The Persecution of the Jews

A second corollary to the breaking of the Seven-Year Covenant is the beginning of a worldwide persecution of the Jews which com-

mences with the Abomination of Desolation, as Matthew 24:15-28 makes clear:

> *When therefore ye see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let him that reads understand), then let them that are in Judaea flee unto the mountains: let him that is on the housetop not go down to take out the things that are in his house: and let him that is in the field not return back to take his cloak. But woe unto them that are with child and to them that give suck in those days! And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on a Sabbath: for then shall be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days had been shortened, no flesh would have been saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened. Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is the Christ, or, Here; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christ, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect. Behold, I have told you beforehand. If therefore they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the wilderness; go not forth: Behold, he is in the inner chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning comes forth from the east, and is seen even unto the west; so shall be the coming of the Son of man. Wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together.*

In this passage Messiah gave a warning to those Jews living at the time when the covenant is broken and the Abomination of Desolation occurs (vv. 15-19). They are warned that as soon as they hear of that event's happening, they are to get out of Israel and to do so quickly. If they happen to be out on the rooftop for some reason, they are not to spend the few minutes needed to come down from the roof and to go into their house to take any possessions. From the moment their foot touches the ground, they are to get out of Israel. If they happen to be out in the field plowing when they hear about it, they are not to take the time to go into the living quarters to take any possessions. From that field they are to get out of Israel. The emphasis is on a speedy flight.

They are also urged to pray that when this event occurs it will not happen during the winter, nor on the Sabbath (v. 20). Why not on the Sabbath? In Israel on the Sabbath day there is no public transportation. The buses are all locked up and the trains do not run. Unless an Israeli has his own automobile, he will find escape very difficult because of the lack of public transportation. An example of this difficulty was demonstrated in the Yom Kippur War of 1973. The Arabs attacked on a holy day, when public transportation was non-existent. This made it especially difficult for the Israelis to mobilize their forces and get them to the front lines. So prayer is urged that it will not happen on the Sabbath. Prayer is also urged that when this event occurs, it ought not happen during the winter. Why not in the winter? After all, it seldom snows in Israel anyway. The reason for this prayer is that the Jews will be escaping toward the mountains in the east. Most of the escape routes will force them to use *wadis*, which are dry water beds that only fill up with flash floods when it rains during the winter months. Israel receives no rain between April and October. From October through the winter months up until April, Israel receives all its rain for the year. When it does rain, many of these *wadis* become filled instantly and very dangerous to cross. Frequently in Israel, people drown because they are caught in these dry river beds during a flash flood. If the Abomination of Desolation occurs during the winter months, it will make the escape toward the east that much more difficult. So prayer is urged that it will not happen in winter.

The reason for the flight is because at this point, worldwide anti-Semitism breaks out. The worldwide persecution of the Jews begins and will continue for the next 3½ years (vv. 21-22).

Verses 23-28 are a special message directed to the believing Remnant within Israel, warning them not to heed any rumor that the Messiah has returned and so come out of hiding. When the Messiah does return, all will be able to see Him and it will be known by all. While all Jews are persecuted, a special emphasis of deception is aimed against the believing Remnant.

A second passage describing the flight of the Jews out of Israel is in Revelation 12:1-17. The passage begins with a historical review and summary in verses 1-5:

And a great sign was seen in heaven: a woman arrayed

> *with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars; and she was with child; and she cried out, travailing in birth, and in pain to be delivered. And there was seen another sign in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his heads seven diadems. And his tail draws the third part of the stars of Heaven, and did cast them to earth: and the dragon stands before the woman that is about to be delivered, that when she is delivered he may devour her child. And she was delivered of a son, a man child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and unto his throne.*

These verses summarize the whole life of Messiah from just before His birth to His ascension. John saw two signs in the heavens. In the first sign (vv. 1-2), Israel is pictured as a woman, a motif taken from the Old Testament concept of Israel as the Wife of Jehovah. The sun, moon, and twelve stars are all common Old Testament figures relating to Israel. The Old Testament background for this sign is Joseph's dream in Genesis 37:9-11:

> *And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it to his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed yet a dream; and, behold, the sun and the moon and eleven stars made obeisance to me. And he told it to his father, and to his brethren; and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall I and your mother and your brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to you to the earth? And his brethren envied him; but his father kept the saying in his mind.*

From this passage, John's vision can easily be interpreted. The sun represents Jacob, who was renamed *Israel*, and both these names were often used to represent the entire nation (e.g., Is. 40:27; 49:5; Jer. 30:10, among others). The moon represents Rachel, who in turn becomes representative of Jewish women, especially Jewish motherhood (Jer. 31:15; Mat. 2:18). The twelve stars represent the twelve sons of Jacob who, in turn, fathered the Twelve Tribes of Israel. Normally, whenever the word *star* is used symbolically, it always refers to angels. It has been used this way several times already in Revelation, and it is used

this way again in verse four, the verse that teaches that one-third of the angels God created fell with Satan. Verse one may be the only exception to this rule since, being based on Joseph's dream, the twelve stars obviously represent the twelve sons of Jacob, who fathered the Twelve Tribes of Israel. But it may not truly be an exception. What Joseph saw in his dream actually were stars and these stars represented the sons of Jacob. When a star is used symbolically for an angel, no actual star is seen. Rather, an angel is seen, but called a *star*, as in Revelation 8:11-12; 9:1, etc. What John saw was an angel, but called him *a star* since in the Old Testament, that was the symbol of angels. What Joseph saw actually were stars, but they represented his brothers. Clearly, then, the woman arrayed with the sun, moon, and stars is representative of Israel (not the Church). In verse two, this woman is seen in the final stages of pregnancy, about to give birth to a child. The vision, then, is of the nation of Israel just before the birth of the Messiah. A good reason why this cannot be the Church is that it would be an anachronism, with the Church giving birth to Messiah whereas the opposite is true.

Then John described the second sign. The *great red dragon* is Satan in all his fierceness (v. 3). The *seven heads and ten horns* represent the final form of the Fourth Gentile World Empire (see Chapter 2, The Times of the Gentiles), now shown to be under Satan's control and authority. The *seven diadems* point to a concept of conquest. Satan wrested authority over the earth from man, and the Gentile empires wrested authority from Israel.

In verse four, the two signs come together. Satan brought his entire demonic host out of his third abode.[5] Using his permission of access to the earth, he brought them down to the earth in an effort to try to slaughter the child about to be born. The demonic host is enumerated as comprising one-third of the stars, meaning one-third of all the angels that God created. Only from this verse is it possible to learn just how many of the angels fell with Satan in the original revolt during his second abode.[6] This attempt to destroy the child was the slaughter of the babes of Bethlehem in Matthew 2:16-18. Satan's attempt to

---

5 See Appendix I, The Six Abodes of Satan.

6 See Appendix I, The Six Abodes of Satan.

destroy the Messiah both before His proper time (Passover) and by the wrong means (stoning in place of crucifixion) continued throughout the course of His ministry. The bringing down of the entire demonic host was evident throughout the life of Messiah. There is a tremendous amount of demonic activity in the Gospels in contrast to the minimal demonic activity found in the Old Testament. Following the Gospels, there is a decrease of demonic activity, as seen in the Book of Acts.

Verse five points out the failure of Satan's attempt to destroy the child. The child, destined to rule the nations with *a rod of iron*, survived until His proper time for death came. After His resurrection, He ascended into Heaven and is presently seated at the right hand of God the Father.

After this historical survey, John's vision moves forward to events that will occur in the middle of the Tribulation, one of which is in verse six:

> *And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared of God, that there they may nourish her a thousand two hundred and threescore days.*

As in the Matthew passage, the woman pictured here is in flight. In the Matthew passage, the flight was to the mountains, but here it is described as being in the wilderness, as well as to one particular place in that wilderness that God had prepared in advance. The exact location will be discussed in Chapter 13, The Great Tribulation: Additional Features and Facts. With Satan's attempt to destroy the child thwarted, Satan will then turn against the nation that produced Him. Satan's perpetual hatred of Israel is based on the fact that it is through Israel that God will fulfill His program of redemption. Furthermore, in this passage, the time of Israel's flight and hiding is given as 1,260 days or 3½ years. This refers to the second half of the Tribulation.

The next section of the chapter, verses 7-12 (discussed earlier in a different context), gives the reason or cause of Israel's flight. Satan is cast out of his third abode into his fourth abode[7] (vv. 7-9) and is confined to the earth for the next 3½ years. There are two results of this angelic war. *First*, there is rejoicing in Heaven because the accuser of

[7] See Appendix I, The Six Abodes of Satan.

the brethren is now cast down (vv. 10-12a) and his access to Heaven is removed forever. But *second*, there is woe for the earth, for Satan is now full of wrath and anger, knowing his time is short (v. 12b), for he now knows it is only 3½ years before the Second Coming. Verses 7-12, then, are somewhat parenthetical, providing the reason for Israel's flight in verse six.

The next section, found in verses 13-17, takes up where verse six left off:

> *And when the dragon saw that he was cast down to the earth, he persecuted the woman that brought forth the man child. And there were given to the woman the two wings of the great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness unto her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. And the serpent cast out of his mouth after the woman water as a river, that he might cause her to be carried away by the stream. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up the river which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon waxed wroth with the woman, and went away to make war with the rest of her seed, that keep the commandments of God, and hold the testimony of Jesus.*

Verse 13 states that once Satan is cast down to the earth he *persecuted the woman*, Israel. Verse 13 should be connected with verse six as giving a further explanation for Israel's flight *into the wilderness*. It should also be connected with verse 12, which concluded that there was woe for the earth, for Satan is full of wrath. The reason is that he knows his time is short, namely, 3½ years. What does he do with this short time left to him? He persecutes Israel, in verse 13. A question that needs to be raised is: What is the logical connection between Satan's knowing his time is short and his persecuting the woman? Why persecute the Jews just because his time is short? This intriguing question will be answered in Chapter 13, The Great Tribulation: Additional Features and Facts.

In verse 14, Israel flees into the wilderness, where she is nourished for *a time, and times and half a time*, which is the same as the 3½ years of verse six. The figure of the *two wings of the great eagle* has provided fertile ground for speculation among "newspaper exegetes." Amazingly, "the wings of the eagle" has been identified as the American Air Force!

After all, the eagle is a symbol of the United States, and so it would appear that the American Air Force will help the Jews escape! But other nations use the eagle as a symbol,[8] and for some reason their air forces are ignored. It has been stated in the very beginning of this book that every symbol in the Revelation is explained either elsewhere in the Revelation itself or somewhere else in the Bible. The figure of flight in connection with the wings of the eagle is to be interpreted by its usage elsewhere. This same figure is found in Exodus 19:4 and Deuteronomy 32:11 in connection with the Exodus from Egypt. Obviously, Moses did not have the help of the American Air Force. The figure, then, is to be explained by its usage elsewhere. It describes a successful flight or escape after being pursued due to divine intervention. Israel was pursued by the Egyptian army but succeeded in escaping into the Wilderness of Sinai due to divine intervention. Here, again, Israel is being pursued, but escapes safely into another wilderness due to divine intervention. This is all that "the wings of the eagle" represent.

Then, in verse 15, the persecution is described in terms of the waters of a river causing a flood, so that Israel might be drowned or destroyed by the flood. Whenever the figure of a flood is used symbolically, it is always a symbol of a military invasion. A good example is Daniel 9:26, where the Roman invasion and devastation of Jerusalem fulfilled in A.D.70 is prophesied or described in terms of a flood. This invasion of Israel sent by Satan was described in Daniel 11:41 as: *He shall enter also into the glorious land*. This is the same invasion spoken of in Revelation 11:1-2 by which the Antichrist will succeed in taking control of both Jerusalem and the Temple and will commit the Abomination of Desolation.

But this invasion will fail (v. 16) in its attempt to destroy the Jews, for Israel will succeed in fleeing *into the wilderness* after being pursued by the invading army. Divine intervention will destroy the pursuing army.

The passage closes (v. 17) describing further the wrath of Satan because of his initial failure to destroy the Jews. In this closing verse, as in the case of the Matthew passage, Satan will then make war specifically against the believing Remnant among the Jews, for it states that he now goes to make war with the rest of the woman's seed, namely,

[8] Germany and Poland are two examples.

those who keep the commandments of God and hold the testimony of Jesus. These will include all the Jewish believers among the Jews at that time, as well as the 144,000 Jews.

Revelation twelve is a picture of Satan's persecution of the Jews with all its fierceness during the Tribulation. It will begin in the middle, after he is cast down to earth. Now he organizes an all-out worldwide anti-Semitic campaign to try to destroy all the Jews once and for all. He will set out on a program to destroy all the Jews still living, for a reason to be seen in Chapter 13, The Great Tribulation: Additional Features and Facts. But the initial attempt to destroy the Jews in the middle of the Tribulation will fail.

Revelation 13 describes the two beings whom Satan will use in his program of Jewish destruction: the Antichrist and the False Prophet. Revelation 13 has already been discussed in previous sections of this chapter, but now it is important to see the connection between Revelation 12 and 13. In Revelation 12, John describes Satan's program and desire to destroy all the Jews once and for all. Chapter 13 then shows the means by which Satan will hope to carry out this program: the two beasts.

To what extent Satan will succeed in his program of Jewish destruction and some other points touching on the Jews in the Tribulation will be discussed in Chapter 13, The Great Tribulation: Additional Features and Facts.

O. Midtribulation Announcements

Revelation 14 serves as a connecting link between the description of the Midtribulation events of Revelation 10-13 and the events of the second half of the Tribulation in Revelation 15-16. Most of what was found in Revelation 11-13 dealt with the activities of the counterfeit trinity in their attempt to usurp the authority of God and to destroy those who persist in worshiping Him alone. Now, in Revelation 14, there are seven proclamations given from the divine side, aimed at doing three things: *First*, to predict the failure of the program of the counterfeit trinity; *second*, to announce the results of the approaching last seven judgments, known as the Bowl Judgments; and *third,* to give words of assurance, encouragement, and comfort to the saints living in the second half of the Tribulation.

The first proclamation is in Revelation 14:1-5:

> *And I saw, and behold, the Lamb standing on the mount Zion, and with him a hundred and forty and four thousand, having his name, and the name of his Father, written on their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and the voice which I heard was as the voice of harpers harping with their harps: and they sing as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four living creatures and the elders: and no man could learn the song save the hundred and forty and four thousand, even they that had been purchased out of the earth. These are they that were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they that follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes. These were purchased from among men, to be the firstfruits unto God and unto the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no lie: they are without blemish.*

The first verse presents what appears to be a millennial scene, with the 144,000 Jews of Revelation seven now on Mount Zion with Messiah, the Lamb. They have the name of God the Father on their foreheads, which is the seal that protected them from death (Rev. 7:3-4). The question is: Why bring in a millennial scene at this juncture of the Book of Revelation? The answer lies in its connection with the previous two chapters, where Satan organized his attempt to destroy the Jews. The first verse of chapter 14 opens with the 144,000 Jews standing on Mount Zion with the protective seal on their foreheads prominently displayed. This shows that Satan's attempt at total Jewish destruction will fail. This is the purpose of the first proclamation, and it will provide comfort to the Tribulation saints. Verses 2-3 describe the song of the 144,000, a song that they alone will know. Four characteristics are described next (vv. 4-5). *First*, they are male virgins, a necessity in light of their calling to evangelize the world during the first half of the Tribulation. The severity of the judgments falling on the earth, and the persecution of the saints initially by the Ecclesiastical Babylon and then by the counterfeit trinity will not be conducive to marriage. *Second*, they follow Messiah wherever He may lead. *Third*, they are the *firstfruits*, a term that indicates the first of much more to come later. The very fact that the 144,000 are merely the firstfruits of many more Jewish believers to come further points

to the failure of the program of the counterfeit trinity. Where the rest come from is a point that will be discussed in Chapter 13, The Great Tribulation: Additional Features and Facts. *Fourth*, in relation to their morality, they are without a lie or blemish; they are not tainted by any kind of false religious or political system.

The second proclamation is in Revelation 14:6-7:

> *And I saw another angel flying in mid heaven, having eternal good tidings to proclaim unto them that dwell on the earth, and unto every nation and tribe and tongue and people; and he says with a great voice, Fear God, and give him glory; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made the heaven and the earth and sea and fountains of waters.*

This proclamation is a final call to the world to accept the gospel in light of the Revelation 13 problem where the Antichrist declares himself to be god, and the False Prophet is calling all men to take upon themselves the Mark of the Beast and thus show their submissive acceptance of the deity of the Antichrist. This proclamation is a call to the inhabitants of the world to choose between Messiah or Antichrist. With the announcement of a final call to heed the gospel comes an announcement of the coming final series of judgments about to be poured out through the Bowl Judgments. In light of the coming judgments, they are urged to worship Him Who made the heavens and the earth.

The third proclamation is in 14:8:

> *And another, a second angel, followed, saying, Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, that has made all the nations to drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.*

This proclamation announces the fall of political Babylon, something that will be detailed in Revelation 18. This point will be discussed further in Chapter 14, The Campaign of Armageddon and the Second Coming of Jesus the Messiah. But for now, the announcement is made that the worldwide capital of the Antichrist is due for destruction.

The fourth proclamation is in 14:9-12:

> *And another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a great voice, If any man worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead, or upon his hand, he*

> *also shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is prepared unmixed in the cup of his anger; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment goes up for ever and ever; and they have no rest day and night, they that worship the beast and his image, and whoso receives the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints, they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.*

This proclamation concerns those who take upon themselves the Mark of the Beast. This is the point of no return. The opportunity of salvation will be available to all as long as they are without the mark. But once the mark is taken, signifying the acceptance of the Antichrist as the one true god, they will have forfeited any further opportunity to be saved. Those who take the mark are destined for two things: *first*, they will *drink of the wine of the wrath of God*, which is the Bowl Judgments of Revelation 15-16; and *second*, they are doomed to eternal torment in the Lake of Fire. By taking the mark, they have reached the point of no return. However, no one will take the mark out of ignorance, for by this time there will have been two worldwide proclamations of the gospel. The first was the 144,000 during the first half of the Tribulation, and the second was the angel in Revelation 14:6-7 in the middle of the Tribulation. Those who accept the mark are those who heard the love of the truth but rejected it (II Thes. 2:8-12). The fourth proclamation concludes in verse 12, declaring that this fact is *the patience of the saints*. By refusing the mark, the saints will undergo heavy persecution and martyrdom. But the encouragement lies in the fact that the persecutors, those with the mark, are doomed to suffer the severe Bowl Judgments in this life and eternal torment in the next.

The fifth proclamation is in 14:13:

> *And I heard a voice from heaven saying, Write, Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, says the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; for their works follow with them.*

As a further word of encouragement and comfort, this proclamation concerns the saints who will die during the second half of the Tribulation. A special blessing is promised to them.

The sixth proclamation is in 14:14-16:

> *And I saw, and behold, a white cloud; and on the cloud I saw one sitting like unto a son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the temple, crying with a great voice to him that sat on the cloud, Send forth your sickle, and reap: for the hour to reap is come; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud cast his sickle upon the earth; and the earth was reaped.*

This proclamation is one of reaping. Reaping is a common symbol for salvation. Thus, this proclamation announces that in spite of the majority accepting the mark, there will be many who, during the second half of the Tribulation, will come to a saving knowledge of Jesus the Messiah.

The seventh proclamation is in 14:17-20:

> *And another angel came out from the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, he that has power over fire; and he called with a great voice to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Send forth your sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel cast his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vintage of the earth, and cast it into the winepress, the great winepress, of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and there came out blood from the winepress, even unto the bridles of the horses, as far as a thousand and six hundred furlongs.*

This proclamation is one of the treading of the grapes. Whereas reaping is a common symbol of salvation, treading is a common symbol of judgment. The grapes are gathered and then undergo the severity of the wrath of God, which is the coming Bowl Judgments; the treading, then, is by means of the Bowl Judgments. This treading takes place *without the city* of Jerusalem, where the Valley of Kidron, also known as the Valley of Jehoshaphat, is located. The treading in this valley results in blood coming out about 4½ feet high for about two hundred miles. With the close of the Bowl Judgments, there is to be a severe judgment of treading, resulting in massive bloodletting. Since this passage involves the Campaign of Armageddon, it will be discussed further in

Chapter 14, The Campaign of Armageddon and the Second Coming of Jesus the Messiah.

P. The Seventh Trumpet: The Third Woe Judgment—Revelation 11:14-19

> *The second Woe is past: behold, the third Woe comes quickly. And the seventh angel sounded; and there followed great voices in heaven, and they said, The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ: and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders, who sit before God on their thrones, fell upon their faces and worshipped God, saying, We give you thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, who is and who was; because you have taken your great power, and did reign. And the nations were wroth, and your wrath came, and the time of the dead to be judged, and the time to give their reward to your servants the prophets, and to the saints, and to them that fear your name, the small and the great; and to destroy them that destroy the earth. And there was opened the temple of God that is in heaven; and there was seen in his temple the ark of his covenant; and there followed lightnings, and voices, and thunders, and an earthquake, and great hail.*

Closing the midtribulational events and announcing the Bowl Judgments of the second half of the Tribulation is the seventh trumpet, which is also the third Woe Judgment (v. 14). When the seventh trumpet is blown an announcement is made that with this trumpet, Messiah will inherit the kingdom of the world (v. 15). It should be noted that the word *kingdom* is singular, and so Messiah will gain the one-world kingdom of the Antichrist. A further announcement is made that the time of the final judgments has also come in order to destroy the ones who are destroying the earth and to avenge the ones who are killing the prophets and the saints (vv. 16-18). These announcements are also declaring the results of the Bowl Judgments, the final series of judgments. Because the results of the seventh Trumpet Judgment are the same as the results of the Bowl Judgments, it shows that, just as the seventh Seal Judgment contains the Seven Trumpet Judgments, the seventh

Trumpet Judgment contains the seven Bowl Judgments (v. 19). This last verse is the prelude in Heaven before the Bowl Judgments, and the focus is on the Temple in Heaven. The *Ark of the Covenant* mentioned is the original ark of which Moses made a copy.

To summarize Revelation 11-16, Revelation 11 closes with the announcement that the Bowl Judgments are about to be poured out. This point is now temporarily dropped, to be picked up again in chapters 15-16. Chapters 11-14 are parenthetical to do two things: *first*, to add some details about the events of the middle of the Tribulation; and *second*, to show why the Bowl Judgments are so necessary. Revelation 12-13 then points out the events on earth necessitating the seven Bowl Judgments contained in the seventh trumpet, namely, the actions of the counterfeit trinity. Revelation 14 shows how the program of the counterfeit trinity will fail and also announces some of the results of the Bowl Judgments. The Bowl Judgments are then described in Revelation 15-16. This is the topic of the next chapter.

This chapter has been primarily concerned with the midtribulation events. Now it is necessary to go on to the events of the second half of the Tribulation.

11

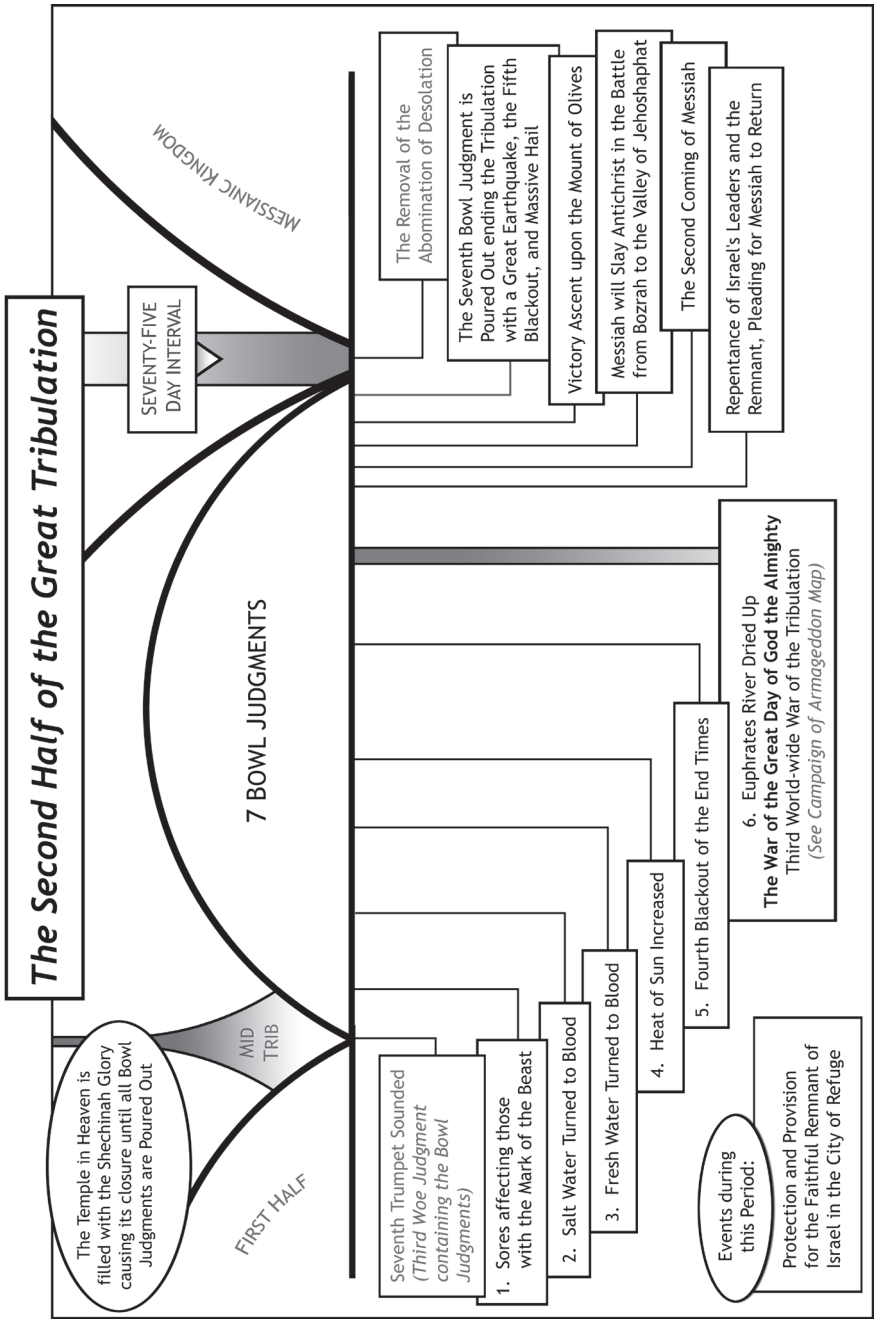

The Second Half of the Great Tribulation
The Temple in Heaven is filled with the Shechinah Glory causing its closure until all Bowl Judgments are Poured Out
MID TRIB
FIRST HALF
SEVENTY-FIVE DAY INTERVAL
MESSIANIC KINGDOM
7 BOWL JUDGMENTS
Seventh Trumpet Sounded (Third Woe Judgment containing the Bowl Judgments)
1. Sores affecting those with the Mark of the Beast
2. Salt Water Turned to Blood
3. Fresh Water Turned to Blood
4. Heat of Sun Increased
5. Fourth Blackout of the End Times
6. Euphrates River Dried Up
The War of the Great Day of God the Almighty
Third World-wide War of the Tribulation
(See Campaign of Armageddon Map)
Events during this Period:
Protection and Provision for the Faithful Remnant of Israel in the City of Refuge
The Removal of the Abomination of Desolation
The Seventh Bowl Judgment is Poured Out ending the Tribulation with a Great Earthquake, the Fifth Blackout, and Massive Hail
Victory Ascent upon the Mount of Olives
Messiah will Slay Antichrist in the Battle from Bozrah to the Valley of Jehoshaphat
The Second Coming of Messiah
Repentance of Israel's Leaders and the Remnant, Pleading for Messiah to Return

Chart #6

TWELVE

The Events of the Second Half of the Tribulation

Obviously, the events beginning in the middle of the Tribulation discussed in the previous chapter continue into the second half, for it will take some time to accomplish all of the events. Thus, the second half will largely be comprised of events already described. But the latter part of the second half will contain the Bowl Judgments, recorded in Revelation 15-16.

A. The Prelude—Revelation 15:1-16:1

And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having seven plagues, which are the last, for in them is finished the wrath of God. And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that come off victorious from the beast, and from his image, and from the number of his name, standing by the sea of glass, having harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are your works, O Lord God, the Almighty; righteous and true are your ways, you King of the ages. Who shall not fear, O Lord, and glorify your name? for you only are holy; for all the nations shall come and worship before you; for your righteous acts have been made manifest. And after these things I saw, and the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened: and there came out from the temple the seven angels that had the seven plagues, arrayed with precious stone, pure and bright, and girded about their breasts with golden girdles. And one of the four living creatures gave unto the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God, who lives for ever

> *and ever. And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and none was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels should be finished. And I heard a great voice out of the temple, saying to the seven angels, Go ye, and pour out the seven bowls of the wrath of God into the earth.*

Verse one picks up from where 11:19 left off and introduces the prelude with the seven angels who have the seven bowls. These are also the last seven judgments, and they contain and bring to completion the wrath of God. Again, the results spelled out under the seventh trumpet come after the seven Bowl Judgments are complete.

Then, in verses 2-4, there is a view of the martyred saints of the second half of the Tribulation. These came off victorious from the pressures to worship the Beast and to take the Mark of the Beast. While they suffered martyrdom, they conquered in the spiritual warfare (v. 2). They are viewed as singing two songs. One is the Song of Moses (v. 3a), which refers to either the song in Exodus 15:1-18, or the one in Deuteronomy 32:1-43. In both cases, it is a song of deliverance. The second is the Song of the Lamb (vv. 3b-4), the content of which is recorded here.

Then, in verses 5-8, the seven bowls are given to the seven angels commissioned to carry out the final series of judgments. As a result of the giving, the Temple in Heaven is filled with the *Shechinah* Glory,[1] causing its closure until all the Bowl Judgments have been poured out. As in 11:19, the focus of the prelude is on the Temple in Heaven.

Finally, in 16:1, the angels are commanded to pour out the seven Bowl Judgments of the wrath of God. The command comes by a voice out of the Temple of God, which has just been filled with the *Shechinah* Glory.

B. The Bowl Judgments

1. The First Bowl Judgment—Revelation 16:2

> *And the first went, and poured out his bowl into the earth;*

[1] See Appendix IV, The *Shechinah* Glory in History and Prophecy.

and it became a noisome and grievous sore upon the men that had the mark of the beast, and that worshipped his image.

The first Bowl Judgment is clearly directed at affecting only those who have the Mark of the Beast in fulfillment of Revelation 14:9-11. It will result in a grievous sore upon the worshipers of the Antichrist. This sore will be some kind of skin ulcer or malignancy on the skin.

2. The Second Bowl Judgment—Revelation 16:3

And the second poured out his bowl into the sea; and it became blood as of a dead man; and every living soul died, even the things that were in the sea.

Whereas under the second Trumpet Judgment one-third of the salt water was affected, in the second Bowl Judgment the rest of the salt water will be turned into blood, destroying the remainder of sea life.

3. The Third Bowl Judgment—Revelation 16:4-7

And the third poured out his bowl into the rivers and the fountains of the waters; and it became blood. And I heard the angel of the waters saying, Righteous are you, who are and who was, you Holy One, because you did thus judge: for they poured out the blood of saints and prophets, and blood have you given them to drink: they are worthy. And I heard the altar saying, Yea, O Lord God, the Almighty, true and righteous are your judgments.

Whereas in the third Trumpet Judgment one-third of the fresh water was destroyed, under the third Bowl Judgment the remainder of the fresh water in rivers and springs will be destroyed, as it too will become blood (v. 4). Apparently, water in wells and cisterns will survive. The act elicits two declarations. *First* (vv. 5-6), the guardian angel assigned to water declares the righteousness of God's judgment in this act. Since men have shed the blood of the prophets and saints, mankind is given blood to drink. The *second* declaration (v. 7) comes from the Altar, further affirming the assessment of God's righteousness being revealed through His judgments.

4. The Fourth Bowl Judgment—Revelation 16:8-9

> *And the fourth poured out his bowl upon the sun; and it was given unto it to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat: and they blasphemed the name of God who has the power over these plagues; and they repented not to give him glory.*

Whereas the fourth Trumpet Judgment affected the sun by destroying one-third of the light source, the fourth Bowl Judgment will also affect the sun by increasing its temperature to the point that men are totally scorched. Mankind will recognize the source of this judgment as coming from God, but instead of turning to Him in faith, they will blaspheme His Name.

5. The Fifth Bowl Judgment—Revelation 16:10-11

> *And the fifth poured out his bowl upon the throne of the beast; and his kingdom was darkened; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, and they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores; and they repented not of their works.*

Among the various results of the fifth Trumpet Judgment was the third blackout. The fifth Bowl Judgment will result in the fourth blackout of the end times. The entire kingdom of the Beast will be darkened which, at this stage, will include the entire world with the exception of the three Transjordanian nations where light will still exist. Along with the darkness comes a gnawing pain that will cause mankind to blaspheme all the more. This will be a thick darkness that can be felt. The circumstances are not unlike what befell Egypt in Exodus 10:21-23.

The sixth (16:12-16) and seventh (16:17-21) Bowl Judgments are both concerned with the Campaign of Armageddon, which will be discussed in Chapter 14, The Campaign of Armageddon and the Second Coming of Jesus the Messiah.

THIRTEEN

The Great Tribulation: Additional Features and Facts

The purpose of this chapter is to fill in some of the gaps concerning the Great Tribulation before dealing with the culminating event of the Campaign of Armageddon. The Old Testament prophets had a great deal to say about the Great Tribulation, and it would be impossible to deal with all of them adequately. This study will be limited to certain key passages.

A. Babylon

As has been indicated in several places earlier, Babylon is to be rebuilt and become the Antichrist's political and economic capital of the world. Passages involving the rebuilding of Babylon will be discussed in connection with the Campaign of Armageddon in the next chapter. All that needs to be noted now is that the prophecies regarding the city of Babylon have never been fulfilled in the past, as any encyclopedia article on Babylon will make quite clear. In order for these prophecies to be fulfilled, it will require the rebuilding of the city of Babylon in the same general area. Ancient Babylon is in present-day Iraq. More will be said on this later.

B. Israel and the Tribulation

Though the whole world will be involved in the Great Tribulation, it will particularly affect Israel, as is evident from the massive amount of Old Testament Scripture concerning this time period. Of the three purposes of the Tribulation previously presented in Chapter 8, Events in Heaven Prior to the Tribulation, the second and third purposes are directly related

to the Jews.[1] Furthermore, the Tribulation will not begin until Israel signs the Seven-Year Covenant. This section will deal with some more points relating to Israel and the Great Tribulation.

1. Israel in General

a. The Time of Jacob's Trouble

The uniqueness of the Tribulation's relationship to Israel is especially brought out in Jeremiah 30:4-7:

> *And these are the words that Jehovah spoke concerning Israel and concerning Judah. For thus says Jehovah: We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. Ask ye now, and see whether a man does travail with child: wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness? Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.*

While the Scriptures have many names for the Great Tribulation, in this passage a name is given that directly relates the Tribulation to the Jewish nation: *the time of Jacob's trouble*. While it is true that all will suffer during that time, Israel will suffer more so. The basic reason for this lies in Israel's relationship to God as God's first born (Ex. 4:22) and, therefore, Israel receives double, both in blessing and cursing. The principle that Israel receives double for all her sins is stated in Isaiah 40:1-2:

> *Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, says your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem; and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received of Jehovah's hand double for all her sins.*

It is also found in Jeremiah 16:16-18:

---

[1] See Chapter 8, The Great Tribulation: Introduction.

> *Behold, I will send for many fishers, says Jehovah, and they shall fish them up; and afterward I will send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the clefts of the rocks. For my eyes are upon all their ways; they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity concealed from my eyes. And first I will recompense their iniquity and their sin double, because they have polluted my land with the carcasses of their detestable things, and have filled my inheritance with their abominations.*

The principle of Israel's receiving double for all her sins is the reason why the Tribulation is uniquely the Time of Jacob's Trouble.

b. General Descriptions

A graphic general description of Israel in the Tribulation is found in Isaiah 3:1-4:1:

> *For, behold, the Lord, Jehovah of hosts, does take away from Jerusalem and from Judah stay and staff, the whole stay of bread, and the whole stay of water; the mighty man, and the man of war; the judge, and the prophet, and the diviner, and the elder; the captain of fifty, and the honorable man, and the counsellor, and the expert artificer, and the skilful enchanter. And I will give children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them. And the people shall be oppressed, every one by another, and every one by his neighbor: the child shall behave himself proudly against the old man, and the base against the honorable. When a man shall take hold of his brother in the house of his father, saying, You have clothing, be you our ruler, and let this ruin be under your hand; in that day shall he lift up his voice, saying, I will not be a healer; for in my house is neither bread nor clothing: ye shall not make me ruler of the people. For Jerusalem is ruined, and Judah is fallen; because their tongue and their doings are against Jehovah, to provoke the eyes of his glory. The show of their countenance does witness against them; and they declare their sin as Sodom, they*

hide it not. Woe unto their soul! for they have done evil unto themselves. Say ye of the righteous, that it shall be well with him; for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him; for what his hands have done shall be done unto him. As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they that lead you cause you to err, and destroy the way of your paths. Jehovah stands up to contend, and stands to judge the peoples. Jehovah will enter into judgment with the elders of his people, and the princes thereof: It is ye that have eaten up the vineyard; the spoil of the poor is in your houses: what mean ye that ye crush my people, and grind the face of the poor? says the Lord, Jehovah of hosts. Moreover, Jehovah said, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with outstretched necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet; therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and Jehovah will lay bare their secret parts. In that day the Lord will take away the beauty of their anklets, and the cauls, and the crescents; the pendants, and the bracelets, and the mufflers; the headtires, and the ankle chains, and the sashes, and the perfume boxes, and the amulets; the rings, and the nose jewels; the festival robes, and the mantles, and the shawls, and the satchels; the hand-mirrors, and the fine linen, and the turbans, and the veils. And it shall come to pass, that instead of sweet spices there shall be rottenness; and instead of a girdle, a rope; and instead of well set hair, baldness; and instead of a robe, a girding of sackcloth: branding instead of beauty. Your men shall fall by the sword, and your mighty in the war. And her gates shall lament and mourn; and she shall be desolate and sit upon the ground. And seven women shall take hold of one man in that day, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by your name; take you away our reproach.

Verses 1-15 describe the effects of the Tribulation on the Jewish leaders for reasons that will be discussed later. This is followed in 3:16-4:1 with a description of the effects on Jewish women. It will involve a removal of

their luxury items (3:16-24) and a sharp reduction of the male population until there will be seven Jewish women for each Jewish male (3:25-4:1).

c. The Day of Jehovah Passages

There are five *Day of Jehovah* passages that directly relate the Great Tribulation to Israel. First, Ezekiel 13:1-7 describes the Day of Jehovah in relation to the false Jewish prophets in the Tribulation:

> *And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying, Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel that prophesy, and say you unto them that prophesy out of their own heart, Hear ye the word of Jehovah: Thus says the Lord Jehovah, Woe unto the foolish prophets, that follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing! O Israel, your prophets have been like foxes in the waste places. Ye have not gone up into the gaps, neither built up the wall for the house of Israel, to stand in the battle in the day of Jehovah. They have seen falsehood and lying divination, that say, Jehovah says; but Jehovah has not sent them: and they have made men to hope that the word would be confirmed. Have ye not seen a false vision, and have ye not spoken a lying divination, in that ye say, Jehovah says; albeit I have not spoken?*

The multiplication of false prophets among Israel will require a massive cleansing, described in Zechariah 13:2-6:

> *And it shall come to pass in that day, says Jehovah of hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered; and also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land. And it shall come to pass that, when any shall yet prophesy, then his father and his mother that begot him shall say unto him, You shall not live; for you speak lies in the name of Jehovah; and his father and his mother that begot him shall thrust him through when he prophesies. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the prophets shall be ashamed every one of his vision, when he prophesies; neither shall they wear a hairy mantle to deceive: but he shall say, I am no prophet, I am a tiller of the ground; for I have been made a bondman from my youth. And one shall*

> *say unto him, What are these wounds between your arms? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.*

Second, in Joel 2:1-11 the Day of Jehovah is depicted as a time of darkness and invasion:

> *Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain; let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of Jehovah comes, for it is nigh at hand; a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, as the dawn spread upon the mountains; a great people and a strong; there has not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after them, even to the years of many generations. A fire devours before them; and behind them a flame burns: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and none has escaped them. The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses; and as horsemen, so do they run. Like the noise of chariots on the tops of the mountains do they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devours the stubble, as a strong people set in battle array. At their presence the peoples are in anguish; all faces are waxed pale. They run like mighty men; they climb the wall like men of war; and they march every one on his ways, and they break not their ranks. Neither does one thrust another; they march every one in his path; and they burst through the weapons, and break not off their course. They leap upon the city; they run upon the wall; they climb up into the houses; they enter in at the windows like a thief. The earth quakes before them; the heavens tremble; the sun and the moon are darkened, and the stars withdraw their shining: and Jehovah utters his voice before his army; for his camp is very great; for he is strong that executes his word; for the day of Jehovah is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?*

Later, in the third passage, Joel 3:14-17, the Day of Jehovah is described as the time of refuge for Israel:

> *Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! for the day of Jehovah is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the*

> *moon are darkened, and the stars withdraw their shining. And Jehovah will roar from Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but Jehovah will be a refuge unto his people, and a stronghold to the children of Israel. So shall ye know that I am Jehovah your God, dwelling in Zion my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more.*

The exact nature of this refuge will be discussed later in this chapter.

Fourth, in Amos 5:18-20 the Day of Jehovah is again depicted as the time of darkness and a time when no one can escape the judgments at hand:

> *Woe unto you that desire the day of Jehovah! Wherefore would ye have the day of Jehovah? It is darkness, and not light. As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him. Shall not the day of Jehovah be darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it?*

Fifth, in Zephaniah 1:7-13 the Day of Jehovah is portrayed as being especially heavy against Jerusalem:

> *Hold your peace at the presence of the Lord Jehovah; for the day of Jehovah is at hand: for Jehovah has prepared a sacrifice, he has consecrated his guests. And it shall come to pass in the day of Jehovah's sacrifice, that I will punish the princes, and the king's sons, and all such as are clothed with foreign apparel. And in that day I will punish all those that leap over the threshold, that fill their master's house with violence and deceit. And in that day, says Jehovah, there shall be the noise of a cry from the fish gate, and a wailing from the second quarter, and a great crashing from the hills. Wail, ye inhabitants of Maktesh; for all the people of Canaan are undone; all they that were laden with silver are cut off. And it shall come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem with lamps; and I will punish the men that are settled on their lees, that say in their heart, Jehovah will not do good, neither will he do evil. And their wealth shall become a spoil, and their*

houses a desolation: yea, they shall build houses, but shall not inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, but shall not drink the wine thereof.

d. Worldwide Anti-semitism

The key passage describing the Great Tribulation as a period of worldwide anti-Semitism is found in Matthew 24:9-28. Since this passage has already been dealt with in detail in the previous sections[2] of this book, only a summary is needed here.[3] Matthew 24:9-14 describes the events of the first half of the Tribulation. Verses 9-12 give some general descriptions, and verse 13 promises that those Jews who endure to the end of the Tribulation shall be saved, a fact to be discussed in the next chapter. Then, in verse 14, there is a description of the preaching of the 144,000 Jews.

Verses 15-28 describe the second half of the Tribulation. Verse 15 announces the Abomination of Desolation, followed by a description of the Jews in flight in verses 16-20. The Great Tribulation is described in verses 21-22 as a time of anti-Semitism, and in verses 23-26 as a time of false religion and false prophets. The passage concludes with the Second Coming in verses 27-28.

e. Israel and Satan

Zechariah 3:1 points out that Satan has always had a special antagonism against the Jews. Revelation 12:1-17 is the central passage describing Satan's relationship to Israel during the Tribulation. At the time, there will be an all-out satanically organized campaign to wipe out the Jews once and for all. Since this, too, has been examined previously in Chapter 11, The Events of the Middle of the Tribulation, an outline will suffice here.

Verses 1-5 lay out a historical summary from the birth to the

---

2 See Chapter 11, The Events of the Middle of the Tribulation.

3 See Appendix V, The Olivet Discourse, for a full exposition of the Olivet Discourse.

ascension of the Messiah. Verse six pictures Israel in flight just as Matthew 24:16-20 did. The picture of Jews on the run is followed by the reason why in verses 7-12. Satan will be cast down to the earth, and he will set out to destroy the Jews. Verses 13-14 further explain verse six, where Israel is in flight. Finally, in verses 15-17, the passage concludes by describing Satan's persecution of the Jews, especially the believing Remnant.

f. The Final Result

To what extent will Satan succeed in destroying the Jews? Zechariah 13:8-9 provides the answer:

> *And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, says Jehovah, two parts therein shall be cut off and die, but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part into the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, Jehovah is my God.*

In the Holocaust under Hitler, one-third of the world's Jewish population died. Under the fierce persecution of the Antichrist, controlled and energized by Satan, two-thirds of the Jewish population will die. This will be the largest and most intense persecution of the Jews ever known in Jewish history.

g. Israel and Michael

Michael, besides being the Archangel, is also the Chief Prince and protective angel assigned to Israel. It is Michael who will cast Satan out of his third abode, in Revelation 12:7-12.[4] But the key passage pointing out Michael's relationship to Israel in the Tribulation is in Daniel 12:1:

> *And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince*

[4] See Appendix I, The Six Abodes of Satan.

> *who stands for the children of your people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time your people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.*

The fact that Israel will survive at all is due to the ministry of the Archangel and Chief Prince Michael.

h. The Four Groups of Jews

During the Great Tribulation period, there will be four distinct groups of Jews, three of whom have been mentioned previously. The first group can be entitled "the apostate Jews." These are "the many" of Daniel 9:27 who will enter the Seven-Year Covenant that will begin the Tribulation. They will comprise about two-thirds of the nation, and will die in the worldwide persecution in the Tribulation.

The second group is known as the 144,000 Jews. They are part of the one-third that will survive the Tribulation. These are the Jews who will be saved and sealed some time after the Rapture of the Church. They will be evangelists during the first half of the Tribulation conducting a worldwide revival.

The third group can be entitled "other Jewish believers." These are Jews who will receive the gospel via the preaching of the 144,000 or the Two Witnesses, or some other way, but are not part of that number. The *every* of Revelation 7:9 must also include Israel. Since the context of Revelation 7:9-17 follows the 144,000 in verses 1-8, the Jews in the latter section will not be part of the 144,000. Since some of these other Jewish believers will be martyred, some will be part of the two-thirds category, while others of the one-third category will survive.

The fourth group is called the Faithful Remnant. Since they are the key group involved in the second half of the Tribulation, they will be dealt with separately, in the following section.

2. The Faithful Remnant

Who are the Faithful Remnant? Based upon all the passages involved, this group will comprise the majority of the one-third of the nation that will survive the Tribulation. Throughout the Tribulation they will be unbe-

lievers as far as the Messiahship of Jesus is concerned and also unbelievers as far as the Antichrist is concerned. These are the "non-many" of Daniel 9:27 who will refuse to have anything to do with the covenant. They are the ones who *shall not be in haste* of Isaiah 28:16.

a. The Fact of the Remnant

The fact that the Remnant will survive is found in Isaiah 10:20-23:

> *And it shall come to pass in that day, that the remnant of Israel, and they that are escaped of the house of Jacob, shall no more again lean upon him that smote them, but shall lean upon Jehovah, the Holy One of Israel, in truth. A remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God. For though your people, Israel, be as the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them shall return: a destruction is determined, overflowing with righteousness. For a full end, and that determined, will the Lord, Jehovah of hosts, make in the midst of all the earth.*

Verse 20 states that unlike the rest of Israel, they will no longer lean on the one who smote them (that is, the Antichrist), but on the Holy One of Israel. While these Jews will be trusting God from the beginning, initially it will not necessarily be faith in Jesus the Messiah. Then, in verse 21, Isaiah declares that ultimately they will return to the God of Israel, a return that can only be accomplished by faith in the Messiah Jesus. Verse 22a points out that in spite of the numerical strength of the Jews, only the Remnant will return to God. Verses 22b-23 talk about a decree of destruction that has been determined upon the whole earth which the Remnant will survive. The words used here are much the same as those found in Isaiah 28:22, where the decree of destruction is issued with the signing of the Seven-Year Covenant beginning the Tribulation. Synthesizing these two Isaiah passages together, it is clear that the Remnant will survive the persecution of the Jews and the massive destruction of the earth during the Tribulation. Hence they are referred to as the *escaped* of Israel here and in Isaiah 4:2; 37:31-32; Joel 2:32; and Obadiah 17.

b. The Protection of the Remnant

Another section of Isaiah records the protection of the Remnant by God's presence with the Remnant, in Isaiah 41:8-16:

> *But you, Israel, my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend, you whom I have taken hold of from the ends of the earth, and called from the corners thereof, and said unto you, You are my servant, I have chosen you and not cast you away; fear you not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you; yea, I will help you; yea, I will uphold you with the right hand of my righteousness. Behold, all they that are incensed against you shall be put to shame and confounded: they that strive with you shall be as nothing, and shall perish. You shall seek them, and shall not find them, even them that contend with you: they that war against you shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought. For I Jehovah your God will hold your right hand, saying unto you, Fear not; I will help you. Fear not, you worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help you, says Jehovah, and your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel. Behold, I have made you to be a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth; you shall thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shall make the hills as chaff. You shall winnow them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them; and you shall rejoice in Jehovah, you shall glory in the Holy One of Israel.*

This is a promise to preserve the Remnant in the midst of tremendous persecution during Satan's campaign to destroy the Jews.

c. The Provision for the Remnant

Since it is forbidden for anyone to buy or sell without the mark of the Beast, how will God preserve and provide for the Remnant? Isaiah has much to say regarding this point. Using the combined words *poor and needy*, a common designation by Isaiah for the Faithful Remnant, Isaiah states in 41:17-20:

> *The poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue fails for thirst; I Jehovah will answer them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers on the bare heights, and fountains in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. I will put in the wilderness the cedar, the acacia, and the myrtle, and the oil-tree; I will set in the desert the fir-tree, the pine, and the box-tree together: that they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of Jehovah has done this, and the Holy One of Israel has created it.*

In the Wilderness of Sinai, God miraculously provided food and water for Israel. He will do so again in the Tribulation when the Jews flee to the wilderness. These miraculous provisions will cause them to reconsider their relationship with God.

In another passage, Isaiah shows how on one hand God will supply for the Faithful Remnant, whereas He will withhold provision from the non-Remnant. This is in Isaiah 65:8-16:

> *Thus says Jehovah, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one says, Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it: so will I do for my servants' sakes, that I may not destroy them all. And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains; and my chosen shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there. And Sharon shall be a fold of flocks, and the valley of Achor a place for herds to lie down in, for my people that have sought me. But ye that forsake Jehovah, that forget my holy mountain, that prepare a table for Fortune, and that fill up mingled wine unto Destiny; I will destine you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter; because when I called, ye did not answer; when I spoke, ye did not hear; but ye did that which was evil in my eyes, and chose that wherein I delighted not. Therefore thus says the Lord Jehovah, Behold, my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry; behold, my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty; behold, my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be put to shame; behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall wail for vexation of spirit. And ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen; and the Lord Jehovah will slay you;*

> *and he will call his servants by another name: so that he who blesses himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth; and he that swears in the earth shall swear by the God of truth; because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hid from my eyes.*

This passage makes clear that, while the apostates will be allowed to suffer and die, the Faithful Remnant will be divinely protected and provided with food and water. By this means, the Faithful Remnant will be able to survive the persecutions and devastations of the Great Tribulation.

3. The City of Refuge

Several times, in previous sections that have dealt with the Jews and the Great Tribulation, mention was made of the Jews in flight, particularly the Faithful Remnant. Thus far no particular spot has been pinpointed. Is it possible to locate the exact place where the Jews will be hiding?

Up to now, three clues have been provided. One clue was in Matthew 24:16:

> *Then let them that are in Judaea flee unto the mountains.*

According to this text, the place of flight and refuge is to be the mountains.

The second and third clues were given in Revelation 12:6 and 14:

> *And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared of God, that there they may nourish her a thousand two hundred and threescore days.*

> *And there were given to the woman the two wings of the great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness unto her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.*

Not only must the place of refuge fulfill the requirement of being in the mountains, it must also fulfill this second requirement of being in the wilderness. Third, the place in the wilderness was prepared by God in advance and therefore indicates a very adequate and preexisting place of refuge.

These are the three clues found in passages examined earlier.

Although inconclusive, another passage which may have a bearing on the question of "where?" is found in Isaiah 33:13-16:

> *Hear, ye that are far off, what I have done; and, ye that are near, acknowledge my might. The sinners in Zion are afraid; trembling has seized the godless ones: Who among us can dwell with the devouring fire? who among us can dwell with everlasting burnings? He that walks righteously, and speaks uprightly; he that despises the gain of oppressions, that shakes his hands from taking a bribe, that stops his ears from hearing of blood, and shuts his eyes from looking upon evil: he shall dwell on high; his place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks; his bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure.*

Since the context is dealing with end time events, this passage also points out a distinction between the apostates and the Faithful Remnant as far as their protection and preservation is concerned. The means by which protection for the Remnant will be accomplished is given in verse 16:

> *He shall dwell on high;*
> *His place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks;*
> *His bread shall be given him;*
> *His waters shall be sure.*

Beside reaffirming the promise mentioned in Isaiah 41:17-20 and 65:8-16 that food and water would be provided, this passage gives some insight as to the nature of the hiding place itself. *First*: it is stated that it will be *on high*, that is, in the mountains, thus reaffirming the Matthew passage. *Second*: the place of defense will be *the munitions of rocks*; that is, the very nature of the place will make it easy to defend.

This brings the total to four clues. The refuge will be:

1. In the mountains;
2. In the wilderness;
3. A place prepared in advance;
4. Very defensible.

Another passage, Micah 2:12, pinpoints the place exactly:

> *I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of you; I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together as the sheep of Bozrah, as a flock in the midst of their pasture; they shall make great noise by reason of the multitude of men.*

The Remnant is gathered together *as the sheep of Bozrah*. Since the sheep of Bozrah are not any different than other sheep, this gathering together as the sheep of Bozrah simply means that they are to be gathered in Bozrah. Israel is the Flock of God, and this flock is to be gathered in Bozrah.

The ancient city of Bozrah was located in the region of Mount Seir. Mount Seir is a very rocky range of mountains, and its name means the "hairy mountains." This fulfills the requirement of the Matthew passage. It is located in the wilderness section of ancient Edom and so fulfills the requirement of the Revelation passage. The very nature of the chain of mountains of Mount Seir makes it quite defensible, fulfilling the requirements of the Isaiah passage. Mount Seir is located in the western side of the ancient Edom, extending from southeast of the Dead Sea down to the city of Akaba. It towers over the Arabah, part of the rift valley from the south shore of the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Eilat. Today the area is in southern Jordan. Other passages connecting the Remnant to Bozrah will be discussed in the next chapter, which deals with the Campaign of Armageddon.

A really fascinating issue is the exact location of Bozrah in the mountain range of Mount Seir. Two places have been suggested. One is the present Arab village of *Buseira*, which seems to retain the name of Bozrah. This is the main argument in favor of it. Another suggestion is the city now known as Petra. While both cities meet all the above requirements, this author prefers the identification with Petra. Petra is located in a basin within Mount Seir, and is totally surrounded by mountains and cliffs. The only way in and out of the city is through a narrow passageway that extends for about a mile and can only be negotiated by foot or by horseback. This makes the city easy to defend, and its surrounding high cliffs give added meaning and confirmation to Isaiah 33:16. Only a few abreast can enter through this passage at any one time, giving this city even greater defensibility. The name *Bozrah* means "sheepfold." An ancient sheepfold had a narrow entrance so that

the shepherd could count his sheep. Once inside the fold, the sheep had more room to move around. Petra is shaped like a giant sheepfold, with its narrow passage opening up to a spacious circle surrounded by cliffs. This is not true of the town of Buseira. Furthermore, by modern Petra is a site known as *Butzeira*, which retains the Hebrew *Botzrah* better than *Buseira*.

Regardless of which of the two cities is to be taken as Old Testament Bozrah, the general area of Mount Seir remains the same. But is there any other reason that this area is chosen besides its natural defensibility? There is an indication of such in the context of Daniel 11:40-45, which was discussed in Chapter 11, The Events of the Middle of the Tribulation. It was noted then that this passage concerns the conquests of the Antichrist in the middle of the Tribulation as he begins his world political takeover. The key verse which bears upon the discussion here is in verse 41:

> *He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown; but these shall be delivered out of his hand: Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon.*

The passage states that while the Antichrist will conquer the whole world, three nations will escape his domination: Edom, Moab, and Ammon. All three of these ancient nations currently comprise the single modern kingdom of Jordan. The city of Bozrah in Mount Seir is located in ancient Edom or southern Jordan. Since this area will escape the domination of the Antichrist, it is logical for the Jews to flee to this place. Thus, God will provide a city of refuge outside the Antichrist's domain for the fleeing Remnant. It will be a very defensible city located in Mount Seir (regardless of which of the two sites one might pick). Furthermore, as they flee and while they are living there, food and water will be miraculously provided.

4. The Basis of the Second Coming of the Messiah

The Rapture of the Church has no preconditions and can come at any moment. But the Second Coming does have a major precondition. There is a condition that must be met before Jesus will return to establish

the Kingdom. But before one can fully understand what the basis of His coming will be, one must first comprehend what the issues were at the time of the rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus.

a. The Rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus

(1) Matthew 12:22-45

In the layout of the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus began His ministry in chapter four. From chapter four until chapter twelve, Jesus went around Israel, city to city and synagogue to synagogue, proclaiming His Messiahship and preaching the gospel of the Kingdom. He was offering to Israel the Kingdom of the Jewish prophets, but the Kingdom was preconditioned by Israel's acceptance of Him as the Messianic King. He performed many miracles, and the purpose of all His miracles between chapters four and twelve was to authenticate His Person (that He is the Messiah) and His message (the gospel of the Kingdom). These miracles were to serve as signs to the nation of Israel to force them to come to a decision about Him. But the purpose of His miracles and His whole ministry underwent a radical change in chapter twelve. The rejection of His Messiahship occurred in Matthew 12:22-37:

> *Then was brought unto him one possessed with a demon, blind and dumb: and he healed him, insomuch that the dumb man spoke and saw. And all the multitudes were amazed, and said, Can this be the son of David? But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This man does not cast out demons, but by Beelzebub the prince of the demons. And knowing their thoughts he said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand: and if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then shall his kingdom stand? And if I by Beelzebub cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out? therefore shall they be your judges. But if I by the Spirit of God cast out demons, then is the kingdom of God come upon you. Or how can one enter into the house of the strong man, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man?*

and then he will spoil his house. He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathers not with me scatters. Therefore I say unto you, Every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven. And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever shall speak against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come. Either make the tree good, and its fruit good; or make the tree corrupt, and its fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by its fruit. Ye offspring of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. The good man out of his good treasure brings forth good things: and the evil man out of his evil treasure brings forth evil things. And I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by your words you shall be justified, and by your words you shall be condemned.

Among the many miracles that Jesus performed was the casting out of demons. Judaism also had exorcists who would cast out demons (v. 27). But in Jewish exorcism, one first had to establish communication with the demon in order to find out his name. Then, using the demon's name, the exorcist could cast him out. On other occasions Jesus did use the Jewish method, as in Luke 8:30. When demons speak they use the vocal chords of the person under their control. However, in the case of the dumb demon, Jewish exorcism was to no avail, for communication with that kind of a demon was impossible. But Jewish theology taught that the Messiah, when He came, would even be able to cast out that kind of demon. The Jewish observation that dumb demons were different was validated by Jesus in Mark 9:17-29 (particularly vv. 17, 25, 29).

In verse 22, Jesus was able to exorcise a dumb demon. In verse 23, this caused the people to begin asking the question, "Can Jesus really be the Messiah?" This was one of the key purposes of this miracle, to get them to see that He indeed was the *Son of David*. However, the people were not willing to come to a decision by themselves, but were looking to their religious leaders, the Pharisees, to reach a verdict for them. They were waiting for the Pharisees to conclude either that He was the Mes-

siah or that He was not the Messiah. These were the only two options the Pharisees had. But if they were to conclude that He was not the Messiah, the Pharisees would also have to explain how Jesus was able to perform His many miracles, especially the miracles that were supposed to be unique to the Messiah only.

In verse 24, the Pharisees made their choice. They refused to accept Jesus as the Messiah because He did not fit the pharisaic mold of what Messiah was supposed to say and do (Lk. 7:30-35). Their alternative explanation as to how He was able to perform His miracles was to declare that Jesus Himself was demon possessed, not by a common demon, but by the prince of demons, *Beelzebub*. This name is a combination of two Hebrew words which mean "the lord of the flies." This, then, became the official *basis* of the rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus. This was "the leaven of the Pharisees" against which Jesus would warn His disciples. They were to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees: the teaching that He was not the Messiah but that He was demon possessed. On these grounds, the Pharisees rejected the Messiahship of Jesus.

In verses 25-29, Jesus responded and told them that this could not be true because it would mean a division in Satan's kingdom.

Then, in verses 30-37, He pronounced a judgment on the Jewish generation of that day. That generation had committed the unpardonable sin: the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit. One should clearly comprehend exactly what the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit is in the context in which it is found, and this is the *only* context in which this sin is found and must be interpreted accordingly. The unpardonable sin was not an individual sin, but a national sin. It was committed by that generation of Israel in Jesus' day and cannot be applied to subsequent Jewish generations. The *content* of the unpardonable sin was the national rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus while He was physically present on the grounds that He was demon possessed. This sin was unpardonable, and judgment was set. The judgment came in the year A.D. 70 with the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple and the worldwide dispersion of the Jewish people. It is not a sin that can be committed by individuals today. It was a national sin committed by the generation of Jesus' day, and for that generation the sin was unpardonable. From this point on, a special emphasis is placed on *this generation* in the Gospels, for it was guilty of a very unique sin.

There was no way of alleviating the judgment appointed for that generation because there would be no forgiveness for this sin. This judgment was to be fulfilled forty years later, in the year A.D. 70.

In verses 38-40, Jesus announced His new policy regarding miracles:

> *Then certain of the scribes and Pharisees answered him, saying, Teacher, we would see a sign from you. But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous* ***generation*** *seeks after a sign; and* ***there shall no sign be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet****: for as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.* (**emphasis added**)

The Pharisees were stunned by the pronouncement of judgment. They tried to retake the offensive by demanding a sign (v. 38)—as though Jesus had done nothing so far to substantiate His Messiahship! But in verse 39, there is a change of policy regarding His signs. From now on, there would be no more signs for the nation except one. While Jesus continued to perform miracles after this event, the purpose of His miracles had changed. No longer were they for the purpose of authenticating His Person and His message to the nation in order to get the nation to come to a decision. That decision had now been made, and made irrevocably. Rather, His miracles would be for the purpose of training the Twelve Apostles for the new kind of ministry they would need to conduct as a result of the rejection of His Messiahship. It is the ministry the Apostles performed in the Book of Acts. For that generation there would be no sign but one: the sign of Jonah, which is the sign of resurrection. It is a sign that would come for Israel on three occasions: *first*, at the resurrection of Lazarus; *second*, at Jesus' own resurrection; and *third*, at the resurrection of the Two Witnesses in the Tribulation. The first two were rejected. The third will be accepted, for the resurrection of the Two Witnesses will lead to the salvation of the Jews of Jerusalem.[5]

Then, in verses 41-45, Jesus concluded with more words of judgment

[5] See Chapter 11, The Events of the Middle of the Tribulation.

for that generation. It should be noted how often the phrase *this generation* appears:

> *The men of Nineveh shall stand up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, a greater than Jonah is here. The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, a greater than Solomon is here. But the unclean spirit, when he is gone out of the man, passes through waterless places, seeking rest, and finds it not. Then he says, I will return into my house whence I came out; and when he is come, he finds it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goes he, and takes with himself seven other spirits more evil than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first.* ***Even so shall it be also unto this evil generation****.* (**emphasis added**)

In verse 41, He compared them with Nineveh and explained why Nineveh will stand in judgment of that generation. The same is true with the Queen of Sheba (v. 42). The people in both cases were Gentiles. With much less revelation than Israel had, they responded even without miracles. But that generation did not.

Then, in verses 43-45, the words of judgment conclude with a story about a demon to illustrate what the final outcome of that generation would be. Jesus related the account of a demon who left on his own volition a man that he had possessed. But when he was unable to find a new body to indwell and control, he returned to his original abode. Although he found it *swept* and *garnished*, he also found it still *empty*. The individual never took the opportunity to fill his life with the Holy Spirit. Nor had another demon entered him. So the demon re-entered the man he originally possessed and then invited seven other demons to join him. The outcome was that the last state of that man had become worse than the first. Originally he was possessed by only one demon. He had the opportunity after the demon left to fill his life with the Spirit of God and failed to do so. Now, the last state of that man was worse because now he was possessed by eight demons.

The point of this story is often missed. Jesus closed the story with the point that what was true of the man was also true of that particular *evil*

generation. When that generation began, it began with the preaching of John the Baptist. John's ministry was to prepare the people for the reception of the Messiah. By means of the preaching of John, that generation was swept and garnished. But now that Messiah had come, they rejected Him on the basis of demon possession. The nation that was swept and garnished now remained empty on account of the rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus. And because it remained empty, the last state of that generation was to be worse than the first.

When that generation began, it was under Roman domination. Nevertheless, it had a national entity. It had a semi-autonomous form of government in the Sanhedrin. Jerusalem stood in all its Herodian glory, and the religious worship system in the Temple remained intact. But later as a result of the rejection and the judgment in the year A.D. 70, the national entity of Israel ceased to exist. In the place of bondage they were dispersed by the Roman armies. The Temple, the center of Judaism, was completely destroyed so that not one stone stood upon another. Eventually, the Jews were dispersed all over the world. So, indeed, the last state of that generation became worse than the first. They went from bondage to worldwide dispersion.

(2) John 11:1-57

Even after the events of Matthew twelve, the Pharisees approached Jesus demanding a sign to authenticate His Person and His message (Mat. 16:1-4). But again He refused to give them any more signs and promised them only *the sign of Jonah*, which is the sign of resurrection.

The resurrection of Lazarus, recorded in John 11:1-44, is the presentation of the first sign of Jonah. Jesus raised others from the dead previously, yet all of the other resurrections are covered in just a few verses. But here John uses 44 verses to give great detail about the resurrection of Lazarus. Why? This is the sign of Jonah that Jesus had promised. In verse 42, Jesus made it very clear for whom Lazarus was raised, namely, the Jewish multitudes:

> *And I knew that you heard me always: but because of the multitude that stands around I said it, that they may believe that you did send me.*

Then, in verses 45-46, there is the response of the Jews:

> *Many therefore of the Jews, who came to Mary and beheld that which he did, believed on him. But some of them went away to the Pharisees, and told them the things which Jesus had done.*

Some Jews responded correctly to this first sign of Jonah and believed that Jesus was Who He claimed to be. But the others still wanted some kind of word or judgment from their leaders, and so they reported to the Pharisees what Jesus had done. Since this was the sign Jesus had promised them, they responded to the challenge in verses 47-50 and 53:

> *The chief priests therefore and the Pharisees gathered a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many signs. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation. But a certain one of them, Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, nor do ye take account that it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. . . . So from that day forth they took counsel that they might put him to death.*

The Pharisees responded in keeping with their original verdict of Matthew 12. The Sanhedrin gathered together to make a decision as to how to respond to the sign of Jonah given in the resurrection of Lazarus. They issued a decree of rejection and sought an opportunity to put Jesus to death. The rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus was now complete. Going beyond the rejection of His Messiahship, they now condemned Him to death.

Verses 54-57 give the results of the Sanhedrin verdict. *First*: Jesus went into hiding for a short period of time, because the hour of His death was not yet come (v. 54). *Second*: the people still raised questions concerning His Person, a logical thing for them to have done in light of the resurrection of Lazarus (vv. 55-56). *Third*: the Sanhedrin's verdict filtered down to the masses in verse 57:

> *Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given commandment, that, if any man knew where he was, he should show it, that they might take him.*

They sought an opportunity to put Him to death. The rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus that occurred in Matthew 12 culminated in John 11

with a decree of death hanging over the Person of Jesus. The first sign of Jonah, the resurrection of Lazarus, was rejected.

(3) Luke 19:41-44

Further light is shed on the nature of the unpardonable sin in the rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus in Luke 19:41-44. This passage is in the context of the Triumphal Entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. Thousands of Jews cried, *Hosanna, blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord*, which in its Jewish frame of reference is an official messianic greeting, based upon the messianic context of Psalm 118:26. The Jewish masses proclaimed His Messiahship as He approached Jerusalem. But the Jewish leaders had already committed the unpardonable sin. Judgment had already been set upon that generation. Since the sin was unforgivable, there was no way of alleviating that judgment. So in spite of the masses proclaiming Him to be the Messiah, Jesus pronounced words of judgment upon the City of Jerusalem, in Luke 19:41-44:

> *And when he drew nigh, he saw the city and wept over it, saying, if you had known in this day, even you, the things which belong unto peace! but now they are hid from your eyes. For the days shall come upon you, when your enemies shall cast up a bank about you and compass you round, and keep you in on every side, and shall dash you to the ground, and your children within you; and they shall not leave in you one stone upon another; because you knew not the time of your visitation.*

(4) Matthew 23:1-36

Another passage of Scripture dealing with the judgment of that generation is Matthew 23:1-36. The entire chapter is devoted to a denunciation and condemnation of the Scribes and Pharisees, the leadership of Israel, for various sins. In verses 1-12, they are condemned for their hypocrisy; in verses 13-14, for leading the nation in rejection of the Messiah; in verse 15, for corrupting the proselytes; in verses 16-22, for making the Mosaic Law ineffectual through pharisaic traditions; in verses 23-24, for majoring in the minors; in verses 25-28, for being concerned with externals only; and in verses 29-36, for rejecting the prophets.

There are two key sections in this condemnation relevant to this discussion. The first is Matthew 23:13:

> *But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye shut the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye enter not in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering in to enter.*

The Pharisees are held accountable not only for their rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus, but also for leading the entire nation to the rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus as well. This is an important factor to note for later understanding of what the basis of the Second Coming of Jesus will be.

The second key passage is Matthew 23:29-36:

> *Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and garnish the tombs of the righteous, and say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we should not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore ye witness to yourselves, that ye are sons of them that slew the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. Ye serpents, ye offspring of vipers, how shall ye escape the judgment of hell? Therefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: some of them shall ye kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city: that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of Abel the righteous unto the blood of Zechariah son of Berechiah, whom ye slew between the sanctuary and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.*

These verses emphasize the severity of the judgment on that generation. The judgment is primarily upon the leaders, but is also upon the nation whom the leaders led in the rejection of His Messiahship. Jesus stated that they were not only to be held accountable for the rejection of His Messiahship, they were also to be held accountable for the blood of all the prophets of the Old Testament. In the Jewish order of the books of the Old Testament,[6] which is what Jesus used, the first book of the Bible is Genesis, where Abel is mentioned. The last book is II Chronicles, where

[6] The number of books is the same, only the order is different.

Zechariah is mentioned. Jesus declared that they were guilty of all the blood from Genesis to II Chronicles, much as people today would say from Genesis to Revelation. So that generation was guilty of the blood of all the prophets. The reason was that everything God intended to say concerning the Messiah had already been said by the Jewish prophets. That generation possessed in their hands the entire Old Testament canon. Furthermore, they had the preaching of John the Baptist announcing the soon coming of the Lord. Finally, they had the physical manifestation and presence of Jesus the Messiah, who came with all the authenticating signs. Nevertheless, they rejected His Messiahship, following the example of their leaders. For this reason they would be held accountable for the blood of all the prophets who spoke about the Messiah. This is something unique for that generation, as declared in verse 36: *Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.* It is the judgment for the unpardonable sin.

The point made so far is this: The Messiahship of Jesus was rejected by the Jewish leadership *and* the Jewish leadership led the nation to the rejection of His Messiahship on the basis of demon possession.

A few days after the above words were spoken, the second sign of Jonah was given in the resurrection of Jesus. This second sign of Jonah was rejected in the first seven chapters of the Book of Acts. The stoning of Stephen in Acts seven by the Sanhedrin marked the official rejection of the second sign of Jonah. That is why only in chapter eight does the gospel for the first time go out to the non-Jewish world.

The Book of Hebrews was written to a group of Jewish believers who, because of persecution, were contemplating a return to Judaism. The writer of the Book of Hebrews warned them that they must completely separate themselves from the Judaism that rejected the Messiah. If they failed to do so, they would be caught up in the judgment of A.D 70 and suffer physical death. Only if they separated themselves from Judaism completely would they have the opportunity to escape the judgment upon that generation. Of course, from Hebrews it is not known what the results were. But it is known from Josephus and Eusebius, quoting Hegisippius, a Jewish believing historian of the second century. These men recorded how the Jewish believers, in obedience to the Book of Hebrews, separated themselves from Judaism. When the revolt against Rome began in the year A.D. 66, the entire Messianic Jewish community left the country and waited out the war in the town of Pella, on the east bank of the Jordan.

Although 1,100,000 Jews died in this Jewish revolt against Rome, not one Jewish believer was killed. Had they not obeyed the writer of the Book of Hebrews, they would have suffered physical death. But since they did obey, they escaped with their lives, and they were freed of the judgment upon that generation.

b. The Prerequisite to the Second Coming

Having said all this, what, then, is the basis of the Second Coming? To discover this, it will be necessary to look at five more passages of Scripture.

The first passage is Leviticus 26:40-42:

> *And they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, in their trespass which they trespassed against me, and also that, because they walked contrary unto me, I also walked contrary unto them, and brought them into the land of their enemies: if then their uncircumcised heart be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity; then will I remember my covenant with Jacob; and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land.*

In Leviticus 26, Moses predicted how, because of disobedience to God's revealed will, the Jews would be scattered all over the world. According to the New Testament, this came as a direct result of the rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus. By verse 39 the worldwide dispersion is a fact. Up to this point, Leviticus 26 has been fulfilled. Then, in verse 42, Moses states that God has every intent to give Israel all the blessings and promises of the Abrahamic Covenant, especially as the covenant pertains to the Promised Land. But before they can begin to enjoy these blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant during the Messianic Age, it is first necessary for them to fulfill the condition of verse 40: *they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers*. It should be noted that the word *iniquity* is in the singular and that it is specific. There is one specific iniquity which Israel must confess before she can begin to enjoy all of the benefits of the Abrahamic Covenant. It was committed by their *fathers* or ancestors, but now must be confessed by a subsequent generation.

The second passage is Jeremiah 3:11-18:

> *And Jehovah said unto me, Backsliding Israel has showed herself more righteous than treacherous Judah. Go, and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, Return, you backsliding Israel, says Jehovah; I will not look in anger upon you; for I am merciful, says Jehovah, I will not keep anger for ever. Only acknowledge your iniquity, that you have transgressed against Jehovah your God, and have scattered your ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, says Jehovah. Return, O backsliding children, says Jehovah; for I am a husband unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion: and I will give you shepherds according to my heart, who shall feed you with knowledge and understanding. And it shall come to pass, when ye are multiplied and increased in the land, in those days, says Jehovah, they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of Jehovah; neither shall it come to mind; neither shall they remember it; neither shall they miss it; neither shall it be made any more. At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of Jehovah; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of Jehovah, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the stubbornness of their evil heart. In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I gave for an inheritance unto your fathers.*

In verses 14-18, Jeremiah begins to describe the blessings which God has in store for Israel in the Messianic Kingdom. It will be a time of tremendous blessing and restoration for the Jewish people when the Kingdom is established by their Messiah. But all these blessings are conditioned by verse 13, where they must acknowledge or confess one specific iniquity which they committed against Jehovah their God.

The third passage is in the Book of Zechariah. Zechariah 12, 13, and 14 are one prophetic revelation, a unit of thought that develops one theme. Chapter 13 speaks of the national cleansing of Israel from their sin. Chapter 14 describes the Second Coming and the establishment of the Kingdom. But the cleansing of Israel followed by the Second Coming and the Messianic Kingdom are all conditioned on Zechariah 12:10:

> *And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication; and they shall look unto me whom they have pierced; and they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born.*

Before Israel will receive the cleansing of her sin and before Messiah will return to establish His Kingdom, Israel must first look *unto* (not *upon*, as in the KJV) the One Whom they have pierced and to plead for His return. Once they do this, then, and only then, will they receive their cleansing and begin to enjoy the blessings of the Messianic Age.

The fourth passage is in Hosea five. The One Who is doing the speaking throughout chapter five of Hosea is God Himself, and God is still speaking in verse 15:

> *I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offense, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me earnestly.*

There are certain presuppositions behind the understanding of this verse. Before anyone can go back to a place, he must first leave it. In this passage, God states that He is going to go back to His place. God's place is Heaven. Before God can go back to Heaven, He must first leave it. The question is: When did God ever leave Heaven? God left Heaven at the incarnation in the Person of Jesus of Nazareth. Then, because of one specific offense (the word is singular) committed against Him, He returned to Heaven at the ascension from the Mount of Olives. This verse further states that He will not come back to the earth until the offense that caused Him to return to Heaven is acknowledged or confessed. What is that Jewish national offense committed against the Person of Jesus? It is not, as so many people think, in killing Him. The actual killing of Jesus was done by Gentile, not Jewish, hands. He was condemned and sentenced by a Gentile judge. He was crucified by Gentile soldiers. But all this is ultimately irrelevant for, regardless of Jewish acceptance or Jewish rejection, Jesus would have had to die anyway to become the sacrifice for sin. The national offense of Israel was in the rejection of His Messiahship. According to this verse, only when this offense is acknowledged or confessed will Messiah return to the earth.

The fifth passage is in Matthew 23. As was shown earlier, this passage

contains Messiah's denunciation of the Scribes and Pharisees, the Jewish leadership of that day, for leading the nation in the rejection of His Messiahship. He was still speaking to them in verses 37-39:

> *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that kills the prophets, and stones them that are sent unto her! how often would I have gathered your children together, even as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord.*

Speaking to the Jewish leadership, Jesus reiterates His original desire to gather them if they would only accept Him (v. 37). Because of their rejection of His Messiahship, instead of being gathered, they are going to be scattered. Their house, the Jewish Temple, will be left desolate and will be destroyed, with nothing remaining (v. 38). But then He declares that they will not see Him again until they say: *Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord.* This is a messianic greeting. It will mean their acceptance of the Messiahship of Jesus.

So Jesus will not come back to the earth until the Jews and the Jewish leaders ask Him to come back. For just as the Jewish leaders once lead the nation to the rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus, they must some day lead the nation to the acceptance of the Messiahship of Jesus.

It is this fact that explains Satan's war against the Jews throughout history in general and during the Tribulation in particular. Satan knows that once Messiah returns, his freedom ends. Satan also knows that Jesus will not come back until the Jewish leaders ask Him to come back. So if Satan can succeed in destroying the Jews once and for all before they come to national repentance, then Jesus will not come back and Satan's career is eternally safe. That is why once Satan is confined to his fourth abode, and knows his time is short, he expends all of his satanic energies to try to destroy the Jews once and for all. Anti-Semitism in any form, active or passive, whether it is racial, ethnic, national, economic, political, religious or theological, is all part of the satanic strategy to avoid the Second Coming.

This, then, is the twofold basis of the Second Coming: Israel must confess her national sin, and then plead for Messiah to return, to *mourn for Him as one mourns for an only son*.

The Campaign of Armageddon
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Tigris R.
Euphrates R.
(dried up prior to Campaign)
BABYLON ②
VALLEY of MEGIDDO (Armageddon) ①
JERUSALEM ③
DEAD SEA
Jordan R.
BOZRAH (or Petra) ⑤
The Eight Stages
1. Assembling of the Allies of Antichrist
2. The Destruction of Babylon
3. The Fall of Jerusalem
4. The Armies of Antichrist at Bozrah
5. The National Regeneration of Israel
6. The Second Coming of Messiah
7. The Battle From Bozrah Ends at The Valley of Jehoshaphat (*During which Antichrist is slain by Messiah*)
8. The Victory Ascent Upon the Mount of Olives

Chart #7

FOURTEEN

The Campaign of Armageddon and The Second Coming of Jesus the Messiah

The two climactic events of the Great Tribulation are the Campaign of Armageddon and the Second Coming. A considerable amount of data is given about this time period in the Scriptures. One of the greatest difficulties in the study of eschatology is placing these events in chronological sequence in order to see what exactly will happen in the Campaign of Armageddon. This chapter is an attempt to do just that.

The Campaign of Armageddon can be divided into eight stages and this, in turn, will facilitate an understanding of the sequence of events.[1]

A. The First Stage: The Assembling of the Allies of the Antichrist

The Campaign of Armageddon will begin with the sixth Bowl Judgment, recorded in Revelation 16:12-16:

> *And the sixth poured out his bowl upon the great river, the river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way might be made ready for the kings that come from the sunrising. And I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits, as it were frogs: for they are spirits of demons, working signs; which go forth unto the kings of the whole world, to gather them together unto the war of the great day of God, the Almighty. (Behold,*

[1] See page 308 for a map of the Campaign of Armageddon.

> *I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.) And they gathered them together into the place which is called in Hebrew Har-Magedon.*

With the outpouring of the sixth Bowl Judgment, the Euphrates River will be dried up (v. 12). This drying-up process will be for the purpose of making it easier for the Antichrist to assemble his forces for the Armageddon Campaign. Although it has become common to identify *the kings that come from the sunrising*, or "the kings of the east," with the Chinese and to combine them with the army of the two hundred million of Revelation nine, neither consistency of exegesis nor the structure of the Book of Revelation will allow for this. Relative to the structure of Revelation, the "two hundred million" and *the kings of the east* belong to two different judgments which must be kept distinct and cannot be combined. The "two hundred million" are in a Trumpet Judgment, whereas *the kings of the east* are in a Bowl Judgment. Furthermore, within the discussion of Revelation nine, it was shown that the two hundred million are demons and not men, Chinese or otherwise. Thus, the structure of the book militates against making these two judgments into one. In regard to consistency of interpretation, it also rules out *the kings of the east* as a reference to the Chinese. Everywhere else in the Scriptures, the east always refers to Mesopotamia (Assyria and Babylonia). Consistency demands that this, too, would be a reference to Mesopotamia and not to China (e.g., Mat. 2:1). The fact that the Antichrist's capital city of Babylon will sit on the banks of the Euphrates River further attests to the fact that the kings who come from the east will be Mesopotamian kings. Thus, consistency of interpretation also militates against matching this reference with China. Consistency of interpretation and not current events must be the basis of determining the meaning of any given text.[2]

The sixth Bowl Judgment will dry up the Euphrates River to make it easier for the Antichrist's Babylonian forces to maneuver. A decree will be issued from the capital city of Babylon ordering the allies of the Antichrist to gather their armies together (vv. 13-14). The gather-

---

[2] See Chapter 10, The Events of the First Half of the Tribulation, for further discussion on this question.

ing for this final campaign against the Jews is clearly the work of the counterfeit trinity. All three members of the counterfeit trinity are involved: the *Dragon*, or Satan (the counterfeit father); the *Beast*, or the Antichrist (the counterfeit son); and the *False Prophet* (the counterfeit holy spirit). The summons will be reinforced by demonic activity to make sure that the nations will indeed cooperate in assembling their armies together. These demonic messengers will be empowered to perform signs in order to assure compliance and defeat any reluctance on the part of the other kings to fall into line. These kings are the seven kings that have been under the authority of the Antichrist since the middle of the Tribulation.[3]

While the term "Battle of Armageddon" has been commonly used, it is really a misnomer, for more than one battle will be taking place. For this reason, many prophetic teachers have stopped employing that term and are using the term "Campaign of Armageddon," as in this chapter. But this, too, is a misnomer because there will be no fighting in Armageddon itself; all of the fighting will take place elsewhere. A more biblical name for this final conflict is found in the closing words of verse 14: *the war of the great day of God, the Almighty.* This is a more accurate description of the nature and extent of this final conflict.

The train of thought is now interrupted by a parenthetical remark (v. 15) that contains a message of comfort and hope to the believers living at this point in the Great Tribulation. They are encouraged to continue in the faith, for when they see the gathering of the armies together, then they can know that the Second Coming is just around the corner. A message of comfort is given at this point to all believers so as to give them hope.

The train of thought is picked up again in verse 16, which names the place where the allies of the Antichrist will be gathered: *Har-Magedon*. As the ASV text shows, the word is a combination of two Hebrew words which mean, "the Mountain of Megiddo." Megiddo was a strategic city located at the western end of the Valley of Jezreel, guarding the famous Megiddo Pass into Israel's largest valley. One can see the entire Valley of Jezreel from the mount upon which the city of Megiddo stood. So

[3] See Chapter 2, The Times of the Gentiles, and Chapter 11, The Events of the Middle of the Tribulation.

what is known as the Valley of Armageddon in Christian circles is actually the biblical Valley of Jezreel. The term *Armageddon* is never applied to the valley itself, but only to the mount at the western end. Here, in this large valley of Lower Galilee, the armies of the world will gather for the purpose of destroying all the Jews still living.

It should be noted that the passage says nothing of a battle in this valley, for no fighting will take place here. The Valley of Jezreel, guarded by the Mountain of Megiddo, will merely serve as the gathering ground for the armies of the Antichrist. Armageddon will play the same role that England played in the closing stages of World War II. The allied forces gathered their armies together in England, but that is not where the final battle took place. The final conflict began on the beaches of Normandy, France, on D-Day. Armageddon will also serve as a gathering place, with the battle beginning elsewhere.

This passage describing the gathering of the armies of the nations is more or less viewed from man's perspective. From man's standpoint, it is merely a military gathering called together by the Antichrist. But two other passages which also speak of this event show God's perspective. The first is in Joel 3:9-11:

> *Proclaim ye this among the nations; prepare war; stir up the mighty men; let all the men of war draw near, let them come up. Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning-hooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong. Haste ye, and come, all ye nations round about, and gather yourselves together: thither cause your mighty ones to come down, O Jehovah.*

God's viewpoint is one of mockery. The nations are mockingly encouraged to go ahead and turn their farming equipment into weapons of war. As for those who are weak, let them persuade themselves and pretend that they are strong. Because while Satan and the Antichrist gather the nations for the purpose of destroying the Jews, God has His own very different purpose for permitting this gathering to take place.

This taunting of the gathering of the nations is also portrayed in Psalm 2:1-6:

> *Why do the nations rage, And the peoples meditate a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against Jehovah, and against his*

> *anointed, saying, Let us break their bonds asunder, And cast away their cords from us, He that sits in the heavens will laugh: The Lord will have them in derision. Then will he speak unto them in his wrath, And vex them in his sore displeasure: Yet I have set my king Upon my holy hill of Zion.*

The gathering of the nations is presented as a gathering against God the Father and His *Anointed*, that is, the Messiah Jesus. By seeking to destroy the Jews, Satan is also seeking to break the cords of God's control of the world. How foolish! Then God is portrayed as sitting in the heavens and laughing, because He will soon have these nations in confusion. It is God Who will set His own king upon Zion, and Satan and the Antichrist will not be able to prevent it.

Although the nations will assemble to carry out the program of the counterfeit trinity, they will actually accomplish the purpose of the Triune God.

This gathering of the armies of the nations in the Valley of Jezreel will be the first stage of the Campaign of Armageddon.

B. The Second Stage: The Destruction of Babylon

The fact that the city of Babylon is to be rebuilt and become the world capital of the Antichrist has been mentioned in the previous chapter. But not only is Babylon to become the world political capital, it is also to become the world economic capital. This fact is portrayed in the vision of Zechariah 5:5-11:

> *Then the angel that talked with me went forth, and said unto me, Lift up now your eyes, and see what is this that goes forth. And I said, What is it? And he said, This is the ephah that goes forth. He said moreover, This is their appearance in all the land; (and, behold, there was lifted up a talent of lead;) and this is a woman sitting in the midst of the ephah. And he said, This is Wickedness: and he cast her down into the midst of the ephah; and he cast the weight of lead upon the mouth thereof. Then lifted I up my eyes, and saw, and,*

> *behold, there came forth two women, and the wind was in their wings; now they had wings like the wings of a stork; and they lifted up the ephah between earth and heaven. Then said I to the angel that talked with me, Whither do these bear the ephah? And he said unto me, To build her a house in the land of Shinar: and when it is prepared, she shall be set there in her own place.*

The *ephah* was a standard measure of weight and became the symbol of economy. This symbol of economy, in this case is a corrupted one, as seen with the addition of *lead*, giving a false measure. Furthermore, it was to be placed in the land of Shinar, which is the same as Babylonia. Hence, the future center of world economy will be in the rebuilt city of Babylon. Throughout the second half of the Tribulation, Babylon will be both the center of world economy and the world political center.

But later, in the second stage of the Campaign of Armageddon, Babylon will suffer a sudden devastation. Several passages are concerned with the future destruction of this city, but this study will be limited to certain key passages.

The first passage is Isaiah 13:1-14:23. The means by which this destruction will occur is explained in Isaiah 13:1-5:

> *The burden of Babylon, which Isaiah the son of Amoz did see. Set ye up an ensign upon the bare mountain, lift up the voice unto them, wave the hand, that they may go into the gates of the nobles. I have commanded my consecrated ones, yea, I have called my mighty men for my anger, even my proudly exulting ones. The noise of a multitude in the mountains, as of a great people! the noise of a tumult of the kingdoms of the nations gathered together! Jehovah of hosts is mustering the host for the battle. They come from a far country, from the uttermost part of heaven, even Jehovah, and the weapons of his indignation, to destroy the whole land.*

The burden of Babylon that Isaiah saw was another gathering of many peoples. Whereas the gathering in the first stage will be the pro-Babylon or pro-Antichrist forces, these will be anti-Babylon or anti-Antichrist forces. Their purpose will be to destroy Babylon. The *ones* destroying Babylon are referred to as God's *consecrated ones*. God will use Gentile believers to destroy Babylon. The details of this

destruction are given in Isaiah 13:6-14:23. It should be noted that this prophecy of Babylon's destruction has never been fulfilled in the manner required by the text.

For example, the context of Isaiah 13:6-22 clearly puts the destruction of Babylon, announced in verses 1-5, within the scope and time of *the Day of Jehovah*, a reference to the Great Tribulation. Because this passage was dealt with in Chapter 8, The Great Tribulation: Introduction, it will not be treated in detail here.

Furthermore, Babylon's destruction is connected with the final redemption of Israel in Isaiah 14:1-2:

> *For Jehovah will have compassion on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and the sojourner shall join himself with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob. And the peoples shall take them, and bring them to their place; and the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of Jehovah for servants and for handmaids: and they shall take them captive whose captives they were; and they shall rule over their oppressors.*

In this final destruction, Babylon will become similar to Sodom and Gomorrah in that it will be fit for habitation by only the wild animals of the desert and be uninhabitable for any man. The actual nature of these animals will be discussed in Chapter 20, The Gentiles in the Messianic Kingdom. This is the thrust of Isaiah 13:19-22:

> *And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldeans' pride, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall shepherds make their flocks to lie down there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and ostriches shall dwell there, and wild goats shall dance there. And wolves shall cry in their castles, and jackals in the pleasant palaces: and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged.*

Isaiah's prophecy concerning Babylon concludes in Isaiah 14:22-23,

clearly stating that unlike other nations, Babylon will not even have a surviving remnant:

> *And I will rise up against them, says Jehovah of hosts, and cut off from Babylon name and remnant, and son and son's son, says Jehovah. I will also make it a possession for the porcupine, and pools of water: and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, says Jehovah of hosts.*

Another prophet detailing the destruction of Babylon by a number of peoples is Jeremiah, with two long chapters (50-51) devoted to it. Because of the length of these chapters, it will be necessary to limit the study of these passages to key verses which portray the destruction of Babylon.

The fact that this prophecy concerns Babylon is clearly stated in Jeremiah 50:1:

> *The word that Jehovah spake concerning Babylon, concerning the land of the Chaldeans, by Jeremiah the prophet.*

As in Isaiah, Jeremiah 50:9-10 tells of a gathering of many peoples against the city of Babylon:

> *For, lo, I will stir up and cause to come up against Babylon a company of great nations from the north country; and they shall set themselves in array against her; from thence she shall be taken: their arrows shall be as of an expert mighty man; none shall return in vain. And Chaldea shall be a prey: all that prey upon her shall be satisfied, says Jehovah.*

The extent of this destruction and the warfare is described in Jeremiah 50:11-16:

> *Because ye are glad, because ye rejoice, O ye that plunder my heritage, because ye are wanton as a heifer that treads out the grain, and neigh as strong horses; your mother shall be utterly put to shame; she that bare you shall be confounded: behold, she shall be the hindermost of the nations, a wilderness, a dry land, and a desert. Because of the wrath of Jehovah she shall not be inhabited, but she shall be wholly desolate: every one that goes by Babylon shall be astonished, and hiss at all her plagues. Set yourselves in array against Babylon round about, all ye that bend the bow; shoot at her, spare no arrows: for she has*

> *sinned against Jehovah. Shout against her round about: she has submitted herself; her bulwarks are fallen, her walls are thrown down; for it is the vengeance of Jehovah: take vengeance upon her; as she has done, do unto her. Cut off the sower from Babylon, and him that handles the sickle in the time of harvest: for fear of the oppressing sword they shall turn every one to his people, and they shall flee every one to his own land.*

Later, in Jeremiah 50:21-27, there is a more graphic description of the fall of Babylon:

> *Go up against the land of Merathaim, even against it, and against the inhabitants of Pekod: stay and utterly destroy after them, says Jehovah, and do according to all that I have commanded you. A sound of battle is in the land, and of great destruction. How is the hammer of the whole earth cut asunder and broken! how is Babylon become a desolation among the nations! I have laid a snare for you, and you are also taken, O Babylon, and you were not aware: you are found, and also caught, because you have striven against Jehovah. Jehovah has opened his armory, and has brought forth the weapons of his indignation; for the Lord, Jehovah of hosts, has a work to do in the land of the Chaldeans. Come against her from the utmost border; open her storehouses; cast her up as heaps, and destroy her utterly; let nothing of her be left. Slay all her bullocks; let them go down to the slaughter: woe unto them! for their day is come, the time of their visitation.*

This destruction is to be so total and so final that Babylon will never be inhabited by man again. It will be as total as the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, according to Jeremiah 50:39-40:

> *Therefore the wild beasts of the desert with the wolves shall dwell there, and the ostriches shall dwell therein: and it shall be no more inhabited for ever; neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation. As when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbor cities thereof, says Jehovah, so shall no man dwell there, neither shall any son or man sojourn therein.*

Once again Jeremiah speaks of a gathering of many peoples against Babylon in 50:41-42:

> *Behold, a people comes from the north; and a great nation and many kings shall be stirred up from the uttermost parts of the earth. They lay hold on bow and spear; they are cruel, and have no mercy; their voice roars like the sea; and they ride upon horses, every one set in array, as a man to the battle, against you, O daughter of Babylon.*

Jeremiah fifty concludes with a statement of God's decree against Babylon and the anguish of the nations over the destruction of their world capital in verses 45-46:

> *Therefore hear ye the counsel of Jehovah, that he has taken against Babylon; and his purposes, that he has purposed against the land of the Chaldeans: Surely they shall drag them away, even the little ones of the flock; surely he shall make their habitation desolate over them. At the noise of the taking of Babylon the earth trembles, and the cry is heard among the nations.*

The graphic description of the fall of Babylon in Jeremiah 50 is followed by a more detailed description in Jeremiah 51. It will be Babylon's influence on other nations that will cause God's judgment to fall on her, according to Jeremiah 51:7-9:

> *Babylon has been a golden cup in Jehovah's hand, that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunk of her wine; therefore the nations are mad. Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed: wail for her; take balm for her pain, if so be she may be healed. We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed: forsake her, and let us go every one into his own country; for her judgment reaches unto heaven, and is lifted up even to the skies.*

According to Jeremiah 51:24, the judgment will be especially severe due to Babylon's evil deeds against the people of Israel:

> *And I will render unto Babylon and to all the inhabitants of Chaldea all their evil that they have done in Zion in your sight, says Jehovah.*

Because Babylon has ruled the entire world ruinously, God will now destroy her that had destroyed so many, for Jeremiah 51:25-26 states:

> *Behold, I am against you, O destroying mountain, says Jehovah, which destroys all the earth; and I will stretch out my hand upon you, and roll you down from the rocks, and will make you a burnt mountain. And they shall not take of you a stone for a corner, nor a stone for foundations; but you shall be desolate for ever, says Jehovah.*

Indeed, says Jeremiah 51:29, God has purposed a total and complete destruction of the city of Babylon:

> *And the land trembles and is in pain; for the purposes of Jehovah against Babylon do stand, to make the land of Babylon a desolation, without inhabitant.*

Once more Jeremiah points out, in verses 35-36, that the necessity of this judgment will be due to Babylon's treatment of the Jews:

> *The violence done to me and to my flesh be upon Babylon, shall the inhabitant of Zion say; and, My blood be upon the inhabitants of Chaldea, shall Jerusalem say. Therefore thus says Jehovah: Behold, I will plead your cause, and take vengeance for you; and I will dry up her sea, and make her fountain dry.*

The destruction of Babylon will bring about great rejoicing among the faithful, and it is viewed as God's vengeance against Babylon for mistreatment of the Jews in Jeremiah 51:48-49:

> *Then the heavens and the earth, and all that is therein, shall sing for joy over Babylon; for the destroyers shall come unto her from the north, says Jehovah. As Babylon has caused the slain of Israel to fall, so at Babylon shall fall the slain of all the land.*

The prophecy of Babylon's destruction closes with a description of the results of Babylon's fall in Jeremiah 51:54-58:

> *The sound of a cry from Babylon, and of great destruction from the land of the Chaldeans! For Jehovah lays Babylon waste, and destroys out of her the great voice; and their waves*

> *roar like many waters; the noise of their voice is uttered: for the destroyer is come upon her, even upon Babylon, and her mighty men are taken, their bows are broken in pieces; for Jehovah is a God of recompenses, he will surely requite. And I will make drunk her princes and her wise men, her governors and her deputies, and her mighty men; and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, says the King, whose name is Jehovah of hosts. Thus says Jehovah of hosts: The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly overthrown, and her high gates shall be burned with fire; and the peoples shall labor for vanity, and the nations for the fire; and they shall be weary.*

To seal the prophecies, Jeremiah the Prophet performed a physical act that had a symbolic significance. This act is described in 51:59-64:

> *The word which Jeremiah the prophet commanded Seraiah the son of Neriah, the son of Mahseiah, when he went with Zedekiah the king of Judah to Babylon in the fourth year of his reign. Now Seraiah was chief chamberlain. And Jeremiah wrote in a book all the evil that should come upon Babylon, even all these words that are written concerning Babylon. And Jeremiah said to Seraiah, When you come to Babylon, then see that you read all these words, and say, O Jehovah, you have spoken concerning this place, to cut it off, that none shall dwell therein, neither man nor beast, but that it shall be desolate for ever. And it shall be, when you have made an end of reading this book, that you shall bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of the Euphrates: and you shall say, Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise again because of the evil that I will bring upon her; and they shall be weary. Thus far are the words of Jeremiah.*

A copy of Jeremiah 50:1-52:58 was written on a scroll and tied to a rock. After having been read before the Jewish exiles in Babylon, it was cast into the Euphrates River. Just as the scroll sank, so Babylon will sink.

There are two indications in the text of this prophecy that the king of Babylon, the Antichrist, will not be present in the city when his capital city is destroyed. The first is in Jeremiah 50:43:

> *The king of Babylon has heard the tidings of them, and his*

> *hands wax feeble: anguish has taken hold of him, and pangs as of a woman in travail.*

The second is in Jeremiah 51:31-32:

> *One post shall run to meet another, and one messenger to meet another, to show the king of Babylon that his city is taken on every quarter: and the passages are seized, and the reeds they have burned with fire, and the men of war are affrighted.*

The very fact that messengers must be sent out to inform the king of Babylon that his city is destroyed is a clear-cut indication that he will not be there when it happens. Otherwise, there would be no need to tell him. So where is he? By comparing the Scriptures of the first stage with those of the second stage, it would appear that while the Antichrist is meeting his forces in the Valley of Jezreel, his enemies take the opportunity to gather and destroy his capital city.

Prior to the sudden massive destruction of Babylon, a warning will be given to the Jews who are still in Babylon telling them to flee out of the city before it is too late. This warning comes several times in the prophecy of Jeremiah. The first is in 50:6-8:

> *My people have been lost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray; they have turned them away on the mountains; they have gone from mountain to hill; they have forgotten their resting-place. All that found them have devoured them; and their adversaries said, We are not guilty, because they have sinned against Jehovah, the habitation of righteousness, even Jehovah, the hope of their fathers. Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and go forth out of the land of the Chaldeans, and be as the he-goats before the flocks.*

Later, a second warning is referred to in 50:28:

> *The voice of them that flee and escape out of the land of Babylon, to declare in Zion the vengeance of Jehovah our God, the vengeance of his temple.*

Those who escape from Babylon will flee to Jerusalem to announce Babylon's destruction to the Jews there. This is God's vengeance on Babylon because of Babylon's mistreatment of the Jews and His ven-

geance for His Temple because of the sinful act of the Abomination of Desolation.

A third admonition is found in 51:5-6:

> *For Israel is not forsaken, nor Judah, of his God, of Jehovah of hosts; though their land is full of guilt against the Holy One of Israel. Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and save every man his life; be not cut off in her iniquity: for it is the time of Jehovah's vengeance; he will render unto her a recompense.*

God's vengeance is about to be poured out against Babylon. Therefore, the Jews are encouraged to flee lest they also fall prey to this vengeance. As in 50:28, those escaping will go to Jerusalem to declare what God has done, according to Jeremiah 51:10:

> *Jehovah has brought forth our righteousness: come, and let us declare in Zion the work of Jehovah our God.*

This is followed by a fourth warning in 51:45:

> *My people, go ye out of the midst of her, and save yourselves every man from the fierce anger of Jehovah.*

The fifth and final warning is in 51:50:

> *Ye that have escaped the sword, go ye, stand not still; remember Jehovah from afar, and let Jerusalem come into your mind.*

In this final admonition to flee Babylon before her destruction, they are also instructed to make their way to Jerusalem to inform the Jews there.

Thus, prior to the sudden and great destruction of Babylon, the Jews will be given a warning to leave Babylon. They will succeed in their escape and will make their way to Jerusalem.

Reiterating a previous notation: these prophecies of the destruction of Babylon have never been fulfilled in the manner required by the statements of Scripture. As Daniel 5-6 shows, the Medes and the Persians conquered Babylon intact with Belshazzar being the only casualty. Babylon as a city continued to exist and Daniel was even given a position of authority within the city. The Babylon of past history slowly died out and became a ghost town. Furthermore, this destruction of Babylon is clearly associated with the final regeneration and

restoration of Israel. Such events never did happen in connection with ancient Babylon.

Pertinent to the *regeneration* of Israel Jeremiah 50:4-5 states:

> *In those days, and in that time, says Jehovah, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together; they shall go on their way weeping, and shall seek Jehovah their God. They shall inquire concerning Zion with their faces thitherward, saying, Come ye, and join yourselves to Jehovah in an everlasting covenant that shall not be forgotten.*

In these verses, the destruction of Babylon will come at the same time that Israel is seeking Jehovah their God and entering into *an everlasting covenant* with God, the same as the New Covenant in Jeremiah 31:31-34.

The destruction of Babylon is associated with the *restoration* of Israel in Jeremiah 50:19-20:

> *And I will bring Israel again to his pasture, and he shall feed on Carmel and Bashan, and his soul shall be satisfied upon the hills of Ephraim and in Gilead. In those days, and in that time, says Jehovah, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: For I will pardon them whom I leave as a remnant.*

Israel is viewed as restored in her land with all her sins forgiven so that no one will even be able to find her sins any more. This restoration is to be a result of the destruction of Babylon and can hardly be true of ancient Babylon.

All these things point to the fact that the city of Babylon is to suffer a destruction at the time of Israel's regeneration. This requires Babylon's destruction to come during the Campaign of Armageddon. This in turn requires the city of Babylon to be rebuilt.

Another extensive passage dealing with the destruction of Babylon is Revelation 18:1-24. This chapter of Revelation deals specifically with political and economic Babylon that will rule the world for 3½ years. The passage begins with a declaration of the fall of Babylon in 18:1-3:

> *After these things I saw another angel coming down out of heaven, having great authority; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried with a mighty voice, saying,*

> *Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, and is become a habitation of demons, and a hold of every unclean spirit, and a hold of every unclean and hateful bird. For by the wine of the wrath of her fornication all the nations are fallen; and the kings of the earth committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth waxed rich by the power of her wantonness.*

With its destruction, Babylon is to become a habitation of demons. This will be the place of demonic abode and confinement during the Messianic Age (vv. 1-2). This is hardly true of Babylon today. The reason for this severe judgment of Babylon will be the global political (*kings of the earth*) and economic (*merchants of the earth*) corruption originating in this city because of the Antichrist's rule (v. 3).

As in the Jeremiah prophecies, Revelation 18:4-5 reveals that there will be a call to the Jews to flee the city prior to Babylon's destruction:

> *And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come forth, my people, out of her, that ye have no fellowship with her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues: for her sins have reached even unto heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.*

The cup of Babylon's iniquity will then be full. Lest the Jews become subject to Babylon's judgment, they are urged to flee, and this they will do.

The indictment against Babylon is given next in Revelation 18:6-8:

> *Render unto her even as she rendered, and double unto her the double according to her works: in the cup which she mingled, mingle unto her double. How much soever she glorified herself, and waxed wanton, so much give her of torment and mourning: for she says in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall in no wise see mourning. Therefore in one day shall her plagues come, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire; for strong is the Lord God who judged her.*

Babylon is condemned to receive double the punishment she inflicted on others (v. 6). Because this city, through the counterfeit trinity, will vaunt itself against the God of Heaven (v. 7), it will suffer a swift and sudden destruction by fire (v. 8).

After Babylon's destruction there will be intense lamenting by those who invested heavily in her, became rich by her, but will now be bankrupt by her destruction. Three classes of people will mourn over Babylon, and their lamentations are recorded in Revelation 18:9-19. First is the lamentation of the kings, the political rulers of the world, in 18:9-10:

> *And the kings of the earth, who committed fornication and lived wantonly with her, shall weep and wail over her, when they look upon the smoke of her burning, standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Woe, woe, the great city, Babylon, the strong city! for in one hour is your judgment come.*

These are the seven kings who have co-reigned with the Antichrist and submitted their authority to the Antichrist, the king of Babylon. Whatever power or authority they held, was held by the grace of Babylon. Seeing their authority waning with Babylon's destruction, they will lament the swiftness of the judgment. They will be able to see the smoke of Babylon *afar off*, for they will see it from the Valley of Jezreel in Israel.

The second group of mourners are the merchants in 18:11-17a:

> *And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her, for no man buys their merchandise any more; merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stone, and pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet; and all thyine wood, and every vessel of ivory, and every vessel made of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble; and cinnamon, and spice, and incense, and ointment, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and cattle, and sheep; and merchandise of horses and chariots and slaves; and souls of men. And the fruits which your soul lusted after are gone from you, and all things that were dainty and sumptuous are perished from you, and men shall find them no more at all. The merchants of these things, who were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and mourning; saying, Woe, woe, the great city, she that was arrayed in fine linen and purple and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stone and pearl! for in one hour so great riches is made desolate.*

Babylon will become the economic center of the world, the center of business and world trade, a city characterized by the luxury items listed in this passage. But it will suddenly all go up in smoke, and the wealth of the merchants will be no more. Swiftly becoming paupers, the merchants will be heard lamenting indeed.

The transporters of goods are the third group who benefited from their association with Babylon. But they, too, will lament, in 18:17b-19:

> *And every shipmaster, and every one that sails any whither, and mariners, and as many as gain their living by sea, stood afar off, and cried out as they looked upon the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like the great city? And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and mourning, saying, Woe, woe, the great city, wherein all that had their ships in the sea were made rich by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate.*

Since the merchants will no longer have goods to market, the transporters will no longer have merchandise to transport, by which they have become rich. Hence, they, too, will lament greatly the sudden destruction.

However, while three groups are in mourning, there will be three other groups rejoicing in 18:20:

> *Rejoice over her, you heaven, and ye saints, and ye apostles, and ye prophets; for God has judged your judgment on her.*

There will be lamenting on the earth by kings, merchants, and transporters. But in Heaven there will be three groups rejoicing: saints, apostles, and prophets. The destruction of Babylon will mark the soon return of the Messiah.

The passage ends with a picture of the totality of Babylon's destruction in 18:21-24:

> *And a strong angel took up a stone as it were a great millstone and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with a mighty fall shall Babylon, the great city, be cast down, and shall be found no more at all. And the voice of harpers and minstrels and fluteplayers and trumpeters shall be heard no more at all in you; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft, shall be found any more at all in you; and the voice of a mill shall be heard no more at all in*

> *you; and the light of a lamp shall shine no more at all in you; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in you: for your merchants were the princes of the earth; for with your sorcery were all the nations deceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all that have been slain upon the earth.*

Jeremiah commanded a scroll-wrapped stone to be thrown into the Euphrates River to symbolize the sinking of the city of Babylon. Now another person, an angel, also casts a stone, the size of a millstone, into the sea to depict how totally Babylon will disappear so as not to be found any more (v. 21). Babylon will cease to be the world center and capital (vv. 22-23) because she was guilty of the blood of the prophets (e.g. the Two Witnesses) and the slaughter of the Tribulation saints (v. 24).

To summarize the study of the second stage of the Campaign of Armageddon, while the Antichrist will move his forces into the Valley of Jezreel, his enemies will take the opportunity to destroy the city of Babylon quickly and suddenly. According to Isaiah 13:3, they will be Gentile believers of the Tribulation. Just prior to this, however, the Jews will be warned to flee out of Babylon. This they will do, and will make their way to Jerusalem to report to the Jews who are there. This sudden destruction of the world political and economic capital will cause great consternation on the earth, but not in Heaven. For when Babylon's destruction comes, it will signal that the Second Coming will occur soon, and along with it the regeneration and restoration of Israel. More about Babylon's final end will be discussed in Chapter 20, The Gentiles in the Messianic Kingdom.

C. *The Third Stage: The Fall of Jerusalem*

Although the Antichrist will have all his allied forces with him when he receives the news that his capital city has been destroyed, he does not move eastward to destroy his enemies. It is Satan who will be in control and it is Satan's program, that of Jewish destruction, that will be uppermost in his mind. So instead of moving east, the Antichrist will move south against Jerusalem.

It is Zechariah who described this third stage in two places. The first is Zechariah 12:1-3:

> *The burden of the word of Jehovah concerning Israel. Thus says Jehovah, who stretches forth the heavens, and lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him: Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of reeling unto all the peoples round about, and upon Judah also shall it be in the siege against Jerusalem. And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all the peoples; all that burden themselves with it shall be sore wounded; and all the nations of the earth shall be gathered together against it.*

The second is in Zechariah 14:1-2:

> *Behold, a day of Jehovah comes, when your spoil shall be divided in the midst of you. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.*

From the Valley of Jezreel the armies of the Antichrist will move south, and all the armies of all the nations will gather against Jerusalem. Once again, Jerusalem will fall into Gentile hands, and half of the Jewish population will be taken into slavery while the other half will be allowed to remain in the city to await a later fate.

The capture of Jerusalem by the forces of the Antichrist will not come easily. God will greatly energize the Jews to withstand the attack to a great degree, causing heavy losses to the armies of the Antichrist. Zechariah 12:3 stated that all these nations that burden themselves with Jerusalem will be sorely wounded, and Jerusalem will become truly burdensome to them. The empowerment of the Jewish forces is described in Zechariah 12:4-9:

> *In that day, says Jehovah, I will smite every horse with terror, and his rider with madness; and I will open my eyes upon the house of Judah, and will smite every horse of the peoples with blindness. And the chieftains of Judah shall say in their heart, The inhabitants of Jerusalem*

> *are my strength in Jehovah of hosts their God. In that day will I make the chieftains of Judah like a pan of fire among wood, and like a flaming torch among sheaves; and they shall devour all the peoples round about, on the right hand and on the left; and they of Jerusalem shall yet again dwell in their own place, even in Jerusalem. Jehovah also shall save the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem be not magnified above Judah. In that day shall Jehovah defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of Jehovah before them. And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.*

These verses describe God's providential dealings at this stage of the Campaign of Armageddon prior to the actual intervention by the personal return of Jesus the Messiah. In the battle for Jerusalem, the Jewish military leaders will be so energized that they appear to strike down the enemy as quickly as a torch begins to burn up wood that is very dry. The feeble among the Jews take on the strength of David, and the Davids among them take on the strength of the Angel of Jehovah. What is meant by God's saving *the tents of Judah first*, that is, before Jerusalem, will be discussed later in this chapter. Nevertheless, this is one of the ways God will begin destroying the nations that have come against Jerusalem (v. 9).

This energizing of the Jewish forces in the battle for Jerusalem is further described in Micah 4:11-5:1:

> *And now many nations are assembled against you, that say, Let her be defiled, and let our eye see our desire upon Zion. But they know not the thoughts of Jehovah, neither understand they his counsel; for he has gathered them as the sheaves to the threshing-floor. Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion; for I will make your horn iron, and I will make your hoofs brass; and you shall beat in pieces many peoples: and I will devote their gain unto Jehovah, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth. Now shall you gather yourself in troops, O daughter of troops: he has laid siege against us; they shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod*

upon the cheek.

The nations will be assembled against Jerusalem (v. 11) for the purpose of destroying it. But in the course of doing so, these nations will become like sheaves on the threshing-floor (v. 12), and the Jewish forces will be able to thresh them well. However, the battle will be lost, and the Gentiles will capture Jerusalem and symbolize it by smiting Jerusalem's leader on the cheek (v. 1). After such heavy fighting and great losses, the soldiers of the Antichrist will plunder the Jewish homes of Jerusalem, and Jewish women will be subjected to massive rapes (Zech. 14:2). With this, the third stage will come to an end.

D. The Fourth Stage: The Armies of the Antichrist at Bozrah

It has already been shown in the previous chapter that the main concentration of Jews and Jewish leaders will no longer be in Jerusalem or in Israel, but in Bozrah, in the land of Edom or present-day southern Jordan. Since the main purpose of the Campaign of Armageddon is the annihilation of the Jews, the armies of the world will move southward from Jerusalem to Bozrah, as Jeremiah 49:13-14 makes clear:

> *For I have sworn by myself, says Jehovah, that Bozrah shall become an astonishment, a reproach, a waste, and a curse; and all the cities thereof shall be perpetual wastes. I have heard tidings from Jehovah, and an ambassador is sent among the nations, saying, Gather yourselves together, and come against her, and rise up to the battle.*

The next place where the nations of the earth will gather is at Bozrah in order to destroy the Remnant of Israel that will be gathered there (Mic. 2:12). With the completion of the fourth stage, the last three days before the Second Coming begins.

E. The Fifth Stage: The National Regeneration of Israel

It has been pointed out in the previous chapter that when speaking of the basis of the Second Coming, there are two facets to this basis. *First*, there must be the confession of Israel's national sin (Lev. 26:40-42; Jer. 3:11-18; Hos. 5:15); and *second*, a pleading for the Messiah to return (Zech. 12:10; Mat. 23:37-39). With the armies of the Antichrist at the city of Bozrah, the Campaign of Armageddon will begin its last three days, according to Hosea 6:1-3:

> *Come, and let us return unto Jehovah; for he has torn, and he will heal us; he has smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days will he revive us: on the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live before him. And let us know, let us follow on to know Jehovah: his going forth is sure as the morning; and he will come unto us as the rain, as the latter rain that waters the earth.*

This passage is actually a continuation of Hosea five. The chapter division is unfortunate, because it breaks the train of thought. This passage contains the acknowledgment of the sin demanded in 5:15. Verses 1-3 are in the form of a call issued by the Jewish leaders exhorting the nation to repent and confess their national sin (vv. 1-2). Only then will the physical blessings Israel once enjoyed be restored to her (v. 3). The leaders of Israel will finally recognize the reason why the Tribulation has fallen on them. Whether this will be done by the study of the Scriptures, or by the preaching of the 144,000, or via the Two Witnesses (the third sign of Jonah to which the Jews of Jerusalem had already responded), or by the ministry of Elijah, is not clearly stated. Most likely, it will be a combination of these things. But the leaders will come to a realization of the national sin in some way. Just as the Jewish leaders once led the nation to the rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus, they will now lead the nation to the acceptance of His Messiahship by issuing the call of Hosea 6:1-3, which will begin the last three days before the Second Coming.

The confession of Israel's national sin will last for the first two days. The national confession of Israel is given with its actual words in Isaiah 53:1-9:

> *Who has believed our message? and to whom has the arm of Jehovah been revealed? For he grew up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he has no form nor comeliness; and when we see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He was despised, and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and as one from whom men hide their face he was despised; and we esteemed him not. Surely he has borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and Jehovah has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, yet when he was afflicted he opened not his mouth; as a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep that before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who among them considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of my people to whom the stroke was due? And they made his grave with the wicked, and with a rich man in his death; although he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.*

In this confession, they admit that the nation had looked upon Jesus as nothing more than another man, a criminal who had died for His own sins. However, on this occasion they recognize that He was no ordinary man, but the perfect Lamb of God, the Messiah Himself. Furthermore, it was not for His own sins that Messiah died, but for theirs, so that they need not be stricken for their sin.

Thus, the national regeneration will come by means of the national confession of Isaiah 53:1-9. On the third of the last three days, the nation as a nation will be saved, fulfilling the prophecy of Romans 11:25-27:

> *For I would not, brethren, have you ignorant of this mystery, lest ye be wise in your own conceits, that a hardening in part has befallen Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in; and so all Israel shall be saved: even as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer; He shall turn away*

> *ungodliness from Jacob: And this is my covenant unto them, When I shall take away their sins.*

The *all Israel* means just that—every Jew living at that point of time, meaning the third that are left from the original number of Jews living at the start of the Tribulation (Zech. 13:8-9). Israel's national confession and regeneration will be accomplished within two days after the issuance of the call. The second facet leading to the Second Coming is the pleading of Israel for the Messiah to return and save them from their predicament of having the world armies intent on their destruction gathered outside of Bozrah.

The pleading of the Jews for the Messiah to come and save them is the subject of much revelation. It is described in Zechariah 12:10-13:1:

> *And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication; and they shall look unto me whom they have pierced; and they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born. In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon. And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of the Shimeites apart, and their wives apart; all the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart. In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness.*

The pleading of Israel for the Messiah to return will not be confined to the Jews of Bozrah, but will include the Jews still in Jerusalem. It will begin with the confession of the national sin, and then they will plead for His return to save them from the troubles described in the preceding context. They plead for the One Whom they have pierced. This will be the result of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (12:10), Israel's mourning for the Messiah (12:11-14), and the cleansing of Israel's sins (13:1).

Another prophecy of this event is in Joel 2:28-32:

> *And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit. And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of Jehovah comes. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of Jehovah shall be delivered; for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those that escape, as Jehovah has said, and among the remnant those whom Jehovah does call.*

Regeneration is the work of the Holy Spirit, and here the nation of Israel will be regenerated because of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on them, creating some dramatic manifestations in their midst (vv. 28-29). This will be accompanied by wonders in the heavens as well (vv. 30-31). The result of all this is that the Jews of Jerusalem will be delivered and escape, as well as the Remnant of Bozrah (v. 32).

In the process of Israel's regeneration and new prophetic manifestations, the false prophets who have led Israel astray during the course of the Tribulation will be executed, as recorded in Zechariah 13:2-6:

> *And it shall come to pass in that day, says Jehovah of hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered; and also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land. And it shall come to pass that, when any shall yet prophesy, then his father and his mother that begot him shall say unto him, You shall not live; for you speak lies in the name of Jehovah; and his father and his mother that begot him shall thrust him through when he prophesies. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the prophets shall be ashamed every one of his vision, when he prophesies; neither shall they wear a hairy mantle to deceive: but he shall say, I am no prophet, I am a tiller of the ground; for I have been made a bondman from my youth. And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds between your arms? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.*

At the time of Israel's national cleansing from sin (v. 2) the false prophets will be sought out and executed. Often the parents of the false prophets will themselves be the ones to carry out the execution (vv. 2-3). Though many of these false prophets will attempt to hide the fact that they were formerly prophets, the scars on their bodies, a symbol of their prophetic office, will betray them for what they were. Their denials will not be able to save them (vv. 4-6).

That the Remnant comes to a saving knowledge of Jesus the Messiah by way of the fires of the Tribulation is summarized in Zechariah 13:7-9:

> *Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, says Jehovah of hosts; smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered; and I will turn my hand upon the little ones. And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, says Jehovah, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part into the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, Jehovah is my God.*

Verse seven gives the basic reason why the events of the Tribulation will fall on Israel. God's Shepherd, the Messiah, was smitten and so His sheep, Israel, were scattered throughout the world. Toward the latter end of the dispersion will come the Great Tribulation, through which two-thirds of the Jewish population will be killed (v. 8). But the remaining third will be refined. By means of the national confession of their sin, they will be purified (v. 9). God will then answer their pleading for Him to come and save them. They will once again be His people, and He will be their God.

Isaiah 64:1-12 also describes the pleading for the Second Coming:

> *Oh that you would rend the heavens, that you would come down, that the mountains might quake at your presence, as when fire kindles the brushwood, and the fire causeth the waters to boil; to make your name known to your adversaries, that the nations may tremble at your presence! When you did terrible things which we looked not for, you came down; the mountains quaked at your presence. For from of old men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither has the eye seen a God besides you, who works for him that waits for him. You meet him that rejoices and*

> *works righteousness, those that remember you in your ways: behold, you were wroth, and we sinned: in them have we been of long time; and shall we be saved? For we are all become as one that is unclean, and all our righteousnesses are as a polluted garment: and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. And there is none that calls upon your name, that stirs up himself to take hold of you; for you have hid your face from us, and have consumed us by means of our iniquities. But now, O Jehovah, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you our potter; and we all are the work of your hand. Be not wroth very sore, O Jehovah, neither remember iniquity for ever: behold, look, we beseech you, we are all your people. The holy cities are become a wilderness, Zion is become a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation. Our holy and our beautiful house, where our fathers praised you, is burned with fire; and all our pleasant places are laid waste. Will you refrain yourself for these things, O Jehovah? will you hold your peace, and afflict us very sore?*

The passage begins with the pleading for the Lord to *come down* and let the nations realize His presence (vv. 1-2). The Remnant of Israel will remember the mighty works of God in the past (vv. 3-7) and seek those mighty works of God again (v. 8). They will ask for the forgiveness of their sins (v. 9). Their disastrous plight is shown by the fact that Jerusalem had been made a desolation by the nations (vv. 9-10) and the Temple was still defiled (v. 11). The passage ends with a plea for God to intervene lest they, too, become ruined (v. 12).

Several of the Psalms are poetic versions of the pleading of the Remnant for God to come and save them from the invading armies. One such passage is Psalm 79:1-13:

> *O God, the nations are come into your inheritance; Your holy temple have they defiled; They have laid Jerusalem in heaps. The dead bodies of your servants have they given to be food unto the birds of the heavens, The flesh of your saints unto the beasts of the earth. Their blood have they shed like water round about Jerusalem; And there was none to bury them. We are become a reproach to our neighbors, A scoffing and derision to them that are round about us.*

> *How long, O Jehovah? will you be angry for ever? Shall your jealousy burn like fire? Pour out your wrath upon the nations that know you not, And upon the kingdoms that call not upon your name. For they have devoured Jacob, And laid waste his habitation. Remember not against us the iniquities of our forefathers: Let your tender mercies speedily meet us; For we are brought very low. Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of your name; And deliver us, and forgive our sins, for your name's sake. Wherefore should the nations say, Where is their God? Let the avenging of the blood of your servants which is shed Be known among the nations in our sight. Let the sighing of the prisoner come before you: According to the greatness of your power preserve you those that are appointed to death; And render unto our neighbors sevenfold into their bosom Their reproach, wherewith they have reproached you, O Lord. So we your people and sheep of your pasture Will give you thanks for ever: We will show forth your praise to all generations.*

This Psalm is impossible to understand except in the context of the Faithful Remnant's pleading for the Messiah to return and save them from the invading Gentile armies. After recalling the events of the fall of Jerusalem (the third stage), with the city in ruins, the Abomination of Desolation of the Temple, and the death of so many Jews (vv. 1-4), they will plead for God to come down, to rescue them and to pour out His wrath on the Gentile nations (vv. 5-7). They will plead for the forgiveness of the sins of their forefathers (as demanded by Lev. 26:40) who led the nation to the rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus, as well as for the forgiveness of their own sins (vv. 8-9). On the basis of what these Gentile nations have done to Israel, they will ask God to avenge them as He had promised and to save them from their enemies (vv. 10-12). Then they will give thanks and sing the praise of God forever (v. 13).

Another Psalm that describes the pleading of the Remnant is Psalm 80:1-19:

> *Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, You that leads Joseph like a flock; You that sits above the cherubim, shine forth. Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh, stir up your might, And come to save us. Turn us again, O God; And cause*

> *your face to shine, and we shall be saved. O Jehovah God of hosts, How long will you be angry against the prayer of your people? You have fed them with the bread of tears, And given them tears to drink in large measure. You make us a strife unto our neighbors; And our enemies laugh among themselves. Turn us again, O God of hosts; And cause your face to shine, and we shall be saved. You brought a vine out of Egypt: You did drive out the nations, and planted it. You prepared room before it, And it took deep root, and filled the land. The mountains were covered with the shadow of it, And the boughs thereof were like cedars of God. It sent out its branches unto the sea, And its shoots unto the River. Why have you broken down its walls, So that all they that pass by the way do pluck it? The boar out of the wood does ravage it, And the wild beasts of the field feed on it. Turn again, we beseech you, O God of hosts: Look down from heaven, and behold, and visit this vine, And the stock, which your right hand planted, And the branch that you made strong for yourself. It is burned with fire, it is cut down: They perish at the rebuke of your countenance. Let your hand be upon the man of your right hand, Upon the son of man whom you made strong for yourself. So shall we not go back from you: Quicken you us, and we will call upon your name. Turn us again, O Jehovah God of hosts; Cause your face to shine, and we shall be saved.*

This Psalm opens with a pleading for the Shepherd of Israel to come and save them (vv. 1-2). Not only will they plead for their physical deliverance, but also for their spiritual salvation (v. 3). The statement, *turn us again*, points to the repentance and conversion by which *we shall be saved*. After describing the bitter state in which they find themselves, having become the laughing stock of the nations, they will plead once again for God to come and save them (vv. 4-7). Recalling God's past dealings with Israel from the Exodus to the kingdom of David and Solomon (vv. 8-11), they will mourn over their present state of having been slowly brought down by the Gentile nations (vv. 12-13). Therefore, they will appeal to God to turn to them and defend the cause of Israel which had been so badly bruised (vv. 14-16). The specific person they are pleading for is the One on God's right hand (v. 17), referred to as *the son of man*. This is none other than Jesus the Messiah, Who has been sitting at the right hand of

God the Father ever since the ascension from the Mount of Olives after He was rejected by Israel. Only by faith in the Son of Man can Israel be regenerated. Only by calling upon the Name of the Lord can Israel be saved spiritually (vv. 18-19). Only by the return of the Son of Man can Israel be saved physically.

In conclusion, during the fifth stage, Israel as a nation will be regenerated and saved after two days of national confession of sin. On the third day, they will plead for the Second Coming.

F. The Sixth Stage: The Second Coming of the Messiah

In the sixth stage, Jesus will return at the Jewish request for Him to do so. The initial place of His return will not be the Mount of Olives, as is commonly taught, but the place known as Bozrah. Since this fact is relatively new to most people, it would be best to deal with the *place* of the Second Coming before discussing the *manner* of His return.

1. The Place of the Second Coming

Four key passages pinpoint the *place* of the Second Coming at Bozrah. A fifth one has a possible reference to it. The first passage is Isaiah 34:1-7:

> *Come near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye peoples: let the earth hear, and the fulness thereof; the world, and all things that come forth from it. For Jehovah has indignation against all the nations, and wrath against all their host: he has utterly destroyed them, he has delivered them to the slaughter. Their slain also shall be cast out, and the stench of their dead bodies shall come up; and the mountains shall be melted with their blood. And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll; and all their host shall fade away, as the leaf fades from off the vine, and as a fading leaf from the fig-tree. For my sword has drunk its fill in heaven: behold, it shall come down upon Edom, and upon*

> *the people of my curse, to judgment. The sword of Jehovah is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams; for Jehovah has a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Edom. And the wild-oxen shall come down with them, and the bullocks with the bulls; and their land shall be drunken with blood, and their dust made fat with fatness.*

Isaiah begins with a call to all the nations, declaring that God has indignation against all these nations and against their armies in particular. They are destined to be slaughtered with the sword of the Lord (vv. 1-3). Not only will there be convulsions in the earth at this time, but there will be a shaking in the heavens as well (v. 4). But when the sword of God strikes all the armies of all the nations, in what *place* will it strike? The country where all the nations will be smitten is identified as the land of Edom (v. 5). Becoming even more specific, it will occur at the city of Bozrah in the land of Edom (vv. 6-7). According to this passage, the exact geographic spot where God will strike all the armies of all the nations will be the city of Bozrah in the land of Edom (southern Jordan).

A far more graphic description is given in Isaiah 63:1-6. While in a prophetic vision, Isaiah the Prophet was standing on some high point or mountain in Israel looking eastward toward the land of Edom when suddenly he saw a magnificent but blood-stained figure approaching him in glory and splendor. At that point a question and answer session ensues between Isaiah the Prophet and this marching figure. Isaiah initiated the conversion with the first question, in 63:1a:

> *Who is this that comes from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, marching in the greatness of his strength?*

The figure approaching him is coming from the land of Edom and from the city of Bozrah. His features are reflecting His glory, and there is greatness in His strength. There can be little doubt that this figure arrayed with the *Shechinah* Glory[4] is the Jewish Messiah Himself.

The answer to Isaiah's question comes in 63:1b:

---

[4] See Appendix IV, The *Shechinah* Glory in History and Prophecy.

I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.

If there was doubt as to the identity of the Person before, it should be very clear now. Only one man can answer, *I that speak in righteousness.* Only one man has the power that is *mighty to save.* It is the Person of Jesus the Messiah marching toward Israel from the land of Edom and the city of Bozrah.

Isaiah responds to this answer with a second question in 63:2:

> *Wherefore are you red in your apparel, and your garments like him that treads in the winevat?*

Isaiah noticed that the clothing of this individual, though glorified with the *Shechinah* Glory, is nevertheless stained with blood. So Isaiah inquires as to how His garments became stained.

This question is answered in 63:3-6:

> *I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the peoples there was no man with me: yea, I trod them in my anger, and trampled them in my wrath; and their lifeblood is sprinkled upon my garments, and I have stained all my raiment. For the day of vengeance was in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore my own arm brought salvation unto me; and my wrath, it upheld me. And I trod down the peoples in my anger, and made them drunk in my wrath, and I poured out their lifeblood on the earth.*

The staining with blood was caused by a battle fought in the land of Edom and the city of Bozrah. He fought against the nations alone. In the course of trampling the nations, their lifeblood sprinkled on His garments, staining them red (v. 3). The fight was necessary in order for Him to save His redeemed people, Israel (v. 4). He fought all alone and there were none to help Him (vv. 5-6).

The main point to learn from this passage is that the battle is initiated in the land of Edom and at the city of Bozrah. By the time Messiah reaches Israel, His garments are already stained with blood from the slaughter of the enemy.

The third Scripture that places His initial return in this area is Habakkuk 3:3:

> *God came from Teman, And the Holy One from mount Paran. His glory covered the heavens, And the earth was full of his praise.*

Teman and Mount Paran are both in the vicinity of Bozrah and are located in the same mountain range of Mount Seir. The context is obviously speaking of the Second Coming, and that event is said to be in the same area.

All these passages clearly pinpoint the *place* of the Second Coming as being in the land of Edom and at the city of Bozrah. This correlates with where the Remnant of Israel will be located in the last days. The Remnant of Israel gathered in Bozrah and the Second Coming are linked together in the fourth passage, in Micah 2:12-13:

> *I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of you; I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together as the sheep of Bozrah, as a flock in the midst of their pasture; they shall make great noise by reason of the multitude of men. The breaker is gone up before them: they have broken forth and passed on to the gate, and are gone out thereat: and their king is passed on before them, and Jehovah at the head of them.*

The Remnant of Israel will be gathered in Bozrah (v. 12) where they will be besieged by the forces of the Antichrist. They are finally able to break the siege, because Jehovah the King is leading them (v. 13). The *breaker*, the *king*, and *Jehovah* are all the same Person in this verse. At the Second Coming, the Messiah will enter into battle with the forces of the Antichrist which have gathered at this city.

A fifth passage that may refer to this same event is in Judges 5:4-5:

> *Jehovah, when you went forth out of Seir, When you marched out of the field of Edom, The earth trembled, the heavens also dropped, Yea, the clouds dropped water. The mountains quaked at the presence of Jehovah, Even yon Sinai at the presence of Jehovah, the God of Israel.*

It is not really certain that these verses are speaking of the Second Coming, but if so (and the author leans toward this position with caution), God is seen as coming from Mount Seir and from the land of Edom. Mount Seir is the mountain range of southern Jordan in which the city of Bozrah is located.

2. The Manner of the Second Coming

Having identified the *place* of the Second Coming, it is now necessary to look at the Scriptures dealing with the *manner* of the Second Coming, and the final battle between Jesus and the Antichrist. It has already been learned from Isaiah 63:2-6 that when He fights, Messiah will fight alone and no others will participate in the battle.

The manner of the Second Coming is described in Matthew 24:30 as being with the clouds of Heaven:

> *And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.*

Throughout the Old Testament, clouds and the *Shechinah* Glory are interrelated. In this New Testament passage, the interrelationship can be seen again.

According to Acts 1:9-11, He will return in the same manner as He left:

> *And when he had said these things, as they were looking, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they were looking stedfastly into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; who also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking into heaven? this Jesus, who was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld him going into heaven.*

It must be noted that the angels did not prophesy that Jesus would return to the same *place,* but rather in the same *manner* in which He had left. Jesus left in the clouds of Heaven and, according to Matthew 24:30, He will return in the clouds of Heaven.

An extended passage on the Second Coming is in Revelation 19:1-18. Prior to dealing with the manner of the Second Coming itself, this chapter has a prelude composed of three elements in 19:1-10. The first element in 19:1-8 is the fourfold *hallelujah*. The first *hallelujah* is for the fall of the Ecclesiastical Babylon, in 19:1-2:

> *After these things I heard as it were a great voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, Hallelujah; Salva-*

> *tion, and glory, and power, belong to our God: for true and righteous are his judgments; for he has judged the great harlot, her that corrupted the earth with her fornication, and he has avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.*

The second *hallelujah*, in 19:3, is for the destruction of the city of Babylon, the economic and political capital of the world:

> *And a second time they say, Hallelujah. And her smoke goes up for ever and ever.*

The third *hallelujah* is a worshipful praise to God from those around the Throne, namely the 24 elders and the four seraphs, in 19:4-5:

> *And the four and twenty elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshipped God that sits on the throne, saying, Amen; Hallelujah. And a voice came forth from the throne, saying, Give praise to our God, all ye his servants, ye that fear him, the small and the great.*

The fourth *hallelujah*, in 19:6-8, is for the Marriage of the Lamb, which was discussed in Chapter 6, The Eschatology of the Invisible Church:

> *And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, saying, Hallelujah: for the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigned. Let us rejoice and be exceeding glad, and let us give the glory unto him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife has made herself ready. And it was given unto her that she should array herself in fine linen, bright and pure: for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.*

The second element of the prelude is an invitation to the Marriage Feast of the Lamb, in 19:9:

> *And he says unto me, Write, Blessed are they that are bidden to the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he says unto me, These are true words of God.*

It is with the Marriage Feast that the Millennium will begin, but the invitations are sent out just prior to the Second Coming. They go out to all the

redeemed who are not members of the Church, i.e., the Old Testament and Tribulation saints soon to be resurrected.

Finally, the third element of the prelude comes in the declaration of the *spirit of prophecy*, in 19:10:

> *And I fell down before his feet to worship him. And he says unto me, See you do it not: I am a fellow-servant with you and with your brethren that hold the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.*

The spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus. He is the source of all prophecy, and all prophecy moves toward a fulfillment by Him with a view toward His own glory.

With that prelude completed, the Apostle then describes the Second Coming in 19:11-16:

> *And I saw the heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and he that sat thereon called Faithful and True; and in righteousness he does judge and make war. And his eyes are a flame of fire, and upon his head are many diadems; and he has a name written which no one knows but he himself. And he is arrayed in a garment sprinkled with blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which are in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and pure. And out of his mouth proceeds a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treads the winepress of the fierceness of the wrath of God, the Almighty. And he has on his garment and on his thigh a name written,* ***King of Kings, and Lord of Lords****.*

This account of the Second Coming, which begins by describing Messiah as the Judge (vv. 11-13), has many similarities with the descriptions found in the first chapter of Revelation. The war He engages in against the nations is a result of judgment by Him Who is *Faithful and True*. He wears on His head the *diadem* crowns, indicating His natural royalty. His garments are stained with blood, just as in Isaiah 63:1-6, for reasons discussed earlier. This is the Second Coming of the Judge and the incarnate Word of God, Jesus returning in righteousness to judge the nations. When He returns, Messiah will be followed by *armies* (v. 14). The word is in the plural number, meaning that at least two separate armies will return

with Him. One army is known as *hosts of the Lord*, or the angelic army. Matthew 16:27 states:

> *For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then shall he render unto every man according to his deeds.*

Another army that will return with Jesus is the army of the Church saints who had been raptured previously, before the Tribulation. Jude 14-15 describes the events as follows:

> *And to these also Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, Behold, the Lord came with ten thousands of his holy ones, to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their works of ungodliness which they have ungodly wrought, and of all the hard things which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.*

However, Isaiah 63:1-6 made it clear that although the armies of saints and angels will return with Him, they will not participate in the fighting. Messiah will fight this battle by Himself. After describing Jesus in His role as Judge and the armies that return with Him, John next describes Jesus in His office of King (vv. 15-16). After judging the nations as righteous Judge, He is to rule as King, with a rod of iron. These nations will gather and attempt to destroy the Jews in order to abolish God's rule over them (Ps. 2:1-6). However, they will partake of the wrath of God at the Second Coming and He will rule over them. Hence, Jesus will indeed be the *King of Kings* and *Lord of Lords*.

Because of the massive slaughter of all the armies of the nations, another invitation is issued. This one invites the birds of the heavens to the great supper of God, in Revelation 19:17-18:

> *And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in mid heaven, Come and be gathered together unto the great supper of God; that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses and of them that sit thereon, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, and small and great.*

The birds will eat the unburied carcasses of many who participated in the Campaign of Armageddon. In this way, the birds will be filled and satis-

fied, according to Revelation 19:21:

> *And the rest were killed with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, even the sword which came forth out of his mouth: and all the birds were filled with their flesh.*

This feast for the birds is also described in Ezekiel 39:17-20, where the invitation is extended to include the animals of the field:

> *And you, son of man, thus says the Lord Jehovah: Speak unto the birds of every sort, and to every beast of the field, Assemble yourselves, and come; gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, even a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, that ye may eat flesh and drink blood. Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, of rams, of lambs, and of goats, of bullocks, all of them fatlings of Bashan, And ye shall eat fat till ye be full, and drink blood till ye be drunken, of my sacrifice which I have sacrificed for you. And ye shall be filled at my table with horses and chariots, with mighty men, and with all men of war, says the Lord Jehovah.*

Ezekiel closely connects these events with the final redemption of Israel in 39:21-29:

> *And I will set my glory among the nations; and all the nations shall see my judgment that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid upon them. So the house of Israel shall know that I am Jehovah their God, from that day and forward. And the nations shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity; because they trespassed against me, and I hid my face from them: so I gave them into the hand of their adversaries, and they fell all of them by the sword. According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions did I unto them; and I hid my face from them. Therefore thus says the Lord Jehovah: Now will I bring back the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel; and I will be jealous for my holy name. And they shall bear their shame, and all their trespasses whereby they have trespassed against me, when they shall dwell securely in their land, and none shall make them afraid; when I have brought them back from*

> *the peoples, and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations. And they shall know that I am Jehovah their God, in that I caused them to go into captivity among the nations, and have gathered them unto their own land; and I will leave none of them any more there; neither will I hide my face any more from them; for I have poured out my Spirit upon the house of Israel, says the Lord Jehovah.*

Only then will the Gentile nations realize that God did not cast off His people forever. Israel's judgment and dispersion was due to sin, primarily the sin of the rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus. So for a time, God hid His face and allowed the nations to come and cause havoc and destruction. But later, Israel will confess her national sin and seek His face in their affliction (Hos. 5:15). They will seek rescue from the nations that have so sorely afflicted them. The nations will recognize at the Second Coming that God is still Israel's God and He will avenge their affliction of Israel.

In gathering all the armies of the world against Israel, they will actually be gathering against Israel's Messiah, as Revelation 19:19 clearly states:

> *And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat upon the horse, and against his army.*

Another passage giving a description of the Second Coming is Habakkuk 3:1-19:

> *A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet, set to Shigionoth. O Jehovah, I have heard the report of you, and am afraid: O Jehovah, revive your work in the midst of the years; In the midst of the years make it known; In wrath remember mercy. God came from Teman, and the Holy One from mount Paran, His glory covered the heavens, And the earth was full of his praise. And his brightness was as the light; He had rays coming forth from his hand; And there was the hiding of his power. Before him went the pestilence, And fiery bolts went forth at his feet. He stood, and measured the earth; He beheld, and drove asunder the nations; And the eternal mountains were scattered; The everlasting hills did bow; His goings were as of old. I saw*

the tents of Cushan in affliction; The curtains of the land of Midian did tremble. Was Jehovah displeased with the rivers? Was your anger against the rivers, Or your wrath against the sea, That you did ride upon your horses, Upon your chariots of salvation? Your bow was made quite bare; The oaths to the tribes were a sure word. You did cleave the earth with rivers. The mountains saw you, and were afraid; The tempest of waters passed by; The deep uttered its voice, And lifted up it hands on high. The sun and moon stood still in their habitation, At the light of your arrows as they went, At the shining of your glittering spear. You did march through the land in indignation; You did thresh the nations in anger. You went forth for the salvation of your people, For the salvation of your anointed; You wounded the head out of the house of the wicked man, Laying bare the foundation even unto the neck. You did pierce with his own staves the head of his warriors: They came as a whirlwind to scatter me; Their rejoicing was as to devour the poor secretly. You did tread the sea with your horses, The heap of mighty waters. I heard, and my body trembled, My lips quivered at the voice; Rottenness enters into my bones, and I tremble in my place; Because I must wait quietly for the day of trouble, For the coming up of the people that invades us. For though the fig-tree shall not flourish, Neither shall fruit be in the vines; The labor of the olive shall fail, And the fields shall yield no food; The flock shall be cut off from the fold, And there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in Jehovah, I will joy in the God of my salvation. Jehovah, the Lord, is my strength; And he makes my feet like hinds' feet, And will make me to walk upon my high places.

This prayer of Habakkuk (v. 1) is a prophetic one, for it records in vision what can only be the Second Coming. The prayer opens with the pleading of the Remnant (v. 2) to save them physically (*revive your works*) and spiritually (*in wrath remember mercy*). In answer to the Remnant's request, God is viewed as coming from Edom with all His shining glory (vv. 3-4). At His coming, He will begin to render judgment against the gathered nations by various means (vv. 5-7). Nature will also be greatly affected by the Second Coming (vv. 8-10), as will the terrestrial heavenly sphere (v. 11).

The Messiah is next viewed as marching in indignation and threshing the nations (v. 12) on behalf of the people of Israel (v. 13a). The head of the armies, the Antichrist, will be smitten (v. 13b), as well as the soldiers of his armies (vv. 14-15) who have come to scatter the Jews afresh. Having seen this vision of the marching armies and the Second Coming, Habakkuk trembles with the knowledge of what must yet befall his people Israel, where so many will be slaughtered (vv. 16-17). But he takes comfort in the fact that his personal salvation rests in the Lord Who, at the Second Coming, will make all things right (vv. 18-19).

The Book of Psalms contains many poetical references to the Second Coming. A graphic one is found in Psalm 18:8-16:

> *There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, And fire out of his mouth devoured: Coals were kindled by it. He bowed the heavens also, and came down; And thick darkness was under his feet. And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly; Yea, he soared upon the wings of the wind. He made darkness his hiding-place, his pavilion round about him, Darkness of waters, thick clouds of the skies. At the brightness before him his thick clouds passed, Hailstones and coals of fire. Jehovah also thundered in the heavens, And the Most High uttered his voice, Hailstones and coals of fire. And he sent out his arrows, and scattered them; Yea, lightnings manifold, and discomfited them. Then the channels of waters appeared, And the foundations of the world were laid bare, At your rebuke, O Jehovah, At the blast of the breath of your nostrils. He sent from on high, he took me; He drew me out of many waters.*

At His Second Coming, He will come with the wrath of God (vv. 8-9), riding upon a cherub (v. 10), which will have horse-like features, according to Revelation 19:11. There will be convulsions throughout nature at the Second Coming (vv. 11-15) as the entire world is illuminated by the brightness of His glorious return.

So at the sixth stage of the Campaign of Armageddon, Jesus will return at the request of Israel and enter into battle with the Antichrist and his armies. With His return to the Remnant of Israel in Bozrah, He will indeed *save the tents of Judah first,* before saving the Jews of Jerusalem, as Zechariah 12:7 predicted:

> *Jehovah also shall save the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem be not magnified above Judah.*

The term *tents* points to temporary abodes rather than permanent dwellings. The fact that Judah is living in *tents* shows that Judah is not home *in* Judah, but is temporarily elsewhere. That elsewhere is Bozrah. Since the Messiah will *save the tents of Judah first*, this, too, shows that the initial place of His return will be Bozrah and not the Mount of Olives.

G. The Seventh Stage: The Battle From Bozrah to the Valley of Jehoshaphat

While the battle between Messiah and the Antichrist will begin at Bozrah, it will apparently continue all the way back to the eastern walls of Jerusalem, which overlook a section of the Kidron Valley, also known as the Valley of Jehoshaphat. The key passage is Joel 3:12-13:

> *Let the nations bestir themselves, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there will I sit to judge all the nations round about. Put ye in the sickle; for the harvest is ripe: come, tread ye; for the winepress is full, the vats overflow; for their wickedness is great.*

Among the very first casualties will be the Antichrist himself. Having ruled the world with great power and having spoken against the true Son of God, the counterfeit son will be powerless before the True Son. Habakkuk 3:13b described it as follows:

> *You wounded the head out of the house of the wicked man, Laying bare the foundation even unto the neck.*

The simplicity with which Jesus will slay the Antichrist is described by Paul in II Thessalonians 2:8:

> *And then shall be revealed the lawless one, whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his mouth, and bring to nought by the manifestation of his coming.*

The one who has claimed to be god, the one who has been able to

perform all kinds of miracles, signs and wonders, the one who exercised all the authority of Satan as he ruled the world, will be quickly dispensed with by the Word of the Lord Jesus. For the second time, the Antichrist will die.

The arrival of the soul of the Antichrist into Hell is described in Isaiah 14:3-11:

> *And it shall come to pass in the day that Jehovah shall give you rest from your sorrow, and from your trouble, and from the hard service wherein you were made to serve, that you shall take up this parable against the king of Babylon, and say, How has the oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased! Jehovah has broken the staff of the wicked, the sceptre of the rulers; that smote the peoples in wrath with a continual stroke, that ruled the nations in anger, with a persecution that none restrained. The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet: they break forth into singing. Yea, the fir-trees rejoice at you, and the cedars of Lebanon, saying, Since you are laid low, no hewer is come up against us. Sheol from beneath is moved for you to meet you at your coming; it stirs up the dead for you, even all the chief ones of the earth; it has raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations. All they shall answer and say unto you, Are you also become weak as we? are you become like unto us? Your pomp is brought down to Sheol, and the noise of your viols: the worm is spread under you, and worms cover you.*

At the time of the redemption of Israel, the Jews whom the king of Babylon sought to destroy will taunt him with a new parable (vv. 3-4) commemorating the greater strength of the power of God (v. 5). The Antichrist ruled the nations of the world (v. 6), but then the whole world will rejoice over his demise (vv. 7-8). As the spirit of the Antichrist enters into the gates of Hell, the previous great ones of the earth already there will suddenly rise up off their thrones (v. 9) in utter shock that he, too, has entered the abode of Hell (v. 10). Yet it will be so, and all the pomp of his worldwide reign will suffer the demise of Hell (v. 11).

Having described the spirit of the Antichrist in Hell, Isaiah later describes the fate of his dead body on earth in 14:16-21:

> *They that see you shall gaze at you, they shall consider you, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble,*

> *that did shake kingdoms; that made the world as a wilderness, and overthrew the cities thereof; that let not loose his prisoners to their home? All the kings of the nations, all of them, sleep in glory, every one in his own house. But you are cast forth away from your sepulchre like an abominable branch, clothed with the slain, that are thrust through with the sword, that go down to the stones of the pit; as a dead body trodden under foot. You shall not be joined with them in burial, because you have destroyed your land, you have slain your people; the seed of evil-doers shall not be named for ever. Prepare ye slaughter for his children for the iniquity of their fathers, that they rise not up, and possess the earth, and fill the face of the world with cities.*

Many will be able to view the body of the Antichrist and will stare in utter disbelief that he died so suddenly and easily, considering he had shaken the kingdoms of the world and the earth trembled in his presence (vv. 16-17). While lesser kings are buried in pompous sepulchers (v. 18), not so the Antichrist, whose body will be trampled by the fleeing feet of his own armies (v. 19). In fact, his body will never be buried at all (v. 20) for reasons to be discussed in the next chapter. His entire family will be destroyed so that they can not try to follow in their father's footsteps and attempt to rule the world (v. 21).

After the death of the Antichrist, the slaughter of his army will continue. Several passages have been cited already which pictured the Messiah's marching through the land in indignation and treading the nations with His feet, causing blood to be sprinkled on His garments. Zechariah 14:12-15 describes the manner in which these massive hordes of Antichrist's armies will be destroyed:

> *And this shall be the plague wherewith Jehovah will smite all the peoples that have warred against Jerusalem: their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their sockets, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth. And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great tumult from Jehovah shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbor, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbor. And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the nations round about shall be gathered together, gold, and silver, and apparel, in great abundance.*

> *And so shall be the plague of the horse, of the mule, of the camel, and of the ass, and of all the beasts that shall be in those camps, as that plague.*

In this manner, the fight continues all the way back to Jerusalem, coming to an end in the Valley of Jehoshaphat (Joel 3:12-13). The nations that have gathered against the Jews (3:9-11) will now find themselves being trodden by the King of the Jews. It is of this treading in the Valley of Jehoshaphat that Revelation 14:19-20 speaks:

> *And the angel cast his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vintage of the earth, and cast it into the winepress, the great winepress, of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and there came out blood from the winepress, even unto the bridles of the horses, as far as a thousand and six hundred furlongs.*

The city spoken of in these verses is Jerusalem, and the winepress is just outside the city, meaning it is in the Valley of Jehoshaphat. From here the armies of the Antichrist will leave for Bozrah, and they will return here as the conflict comes to an end. The blood stretches for 1,600 furlongs, which is approximately two hundred miles. The two hundred miles may refer to the entire area from the Valley of Armageddon to Bozrah, which is about two hundred miles. Another possible explanation is that it refers to the round trip distance between Jerusalem and Bozrah. The fighting will begin at Jerusalem and move to Bozrah (100 miles), and with the Second Coming, will return back from Bozrah to the Valley of Jehoshaphat (another 100 miles). But the best explanation is based on Jeremiah 49:20-22:

> *Therefore hear ye the counsel of Jehovah, that he has taken against Edom; and his purposes, that he has purposed against the inhabitants of Teman: surely they shall drag them away, even the little ones of the flock; surely he shall make their habitation desolate over them. The earth trembles at the noise of their fall; there is a cry, the noise whereof is heard in the Red Sea. Behold, he shall come up and fly as the eagle, and spread out his wings against Bozrah: and the heart of the mighty men of Edom at that day shall be as the heart of a woman in her pangs.*

In the context (see vv. 13-14), this passage is dealing with the Campaign of

Armageddon. The massive blood-letting that begins at Bozrah begins moving south down the Arabah until it empties in the Red Sea at the present-day cities of Eilat and Akaba. The distance from there to Jerusalem is about two hundred miles. The level of blood is to be about four feet high. Exactly how this will be fulfilled remains to be seen. It may not be totally human blood, but also things turned into blood by divine judgment.

The battle will come to an end in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, ending the seventh stage of the Campaign of Armageddon.

H. The Eighth Stage: The Victory Ascent Up the Mount of Olives

After the actual fighting is completed, there will be a victory ascent up the Mount of Olives which is described in Zechariah 14:3-4a:

> *Then shall Jehovah go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east.*

Since this passage is often used as evidence that the Second Coming will initially take place at the Mount of Olives, it needs to be studied more carefully, especially in light of the other passages. Earlier, in the same context, Zechariah 12:7 stated that Jesus will *save the tents of Judah first*, prior to saving the Jews in Jerusalem. The meaning of this was detailed at the end of the sixth stage of this campaign. Other passages also showing His initial return to Bozrah with the fighting commencing in that place have been previously cited. In Zechariah 14, Jehovah is first seen as going forth to fight against the nations that had gathered against the Jews (v. 3). It is only *after* the fighting of verse three that His feet will stand upon the Mount of Olives (v. 4).

Along with this victory ascent upon the Mount of Olives, a number of cataclysmic events will occur as the Great Tribulation comes to an end. These cataclysmic events will be a result of the seventh Bowl Judgment, described in Revelation 16:17-21:

> *And the seventh poured out his bowl upon the air; and there came forth a great voice out of the temple, from the throne, saying, It is done: and there were lightnings, and*

> *voices, and thunders; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since there were men upon the earth, so great an earthquake, so mighty. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and Babylon the great was remembered in the sight of God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And great hail, every stone about the weight of a talent, comes down out of heaven upon men: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof is exceeding great.*

With the seventh bowl, a voice cries out, *It is done*, because the seventh bowl brings the Tribulation to a definite end (v. 17). This declaration will be followed by convulsions of nature, including the greatest earthquake ever to occur in the history of the earth (v. 18). This will cause the City of Jerusalem to split into three divisions, while the city of Babylon will suffer the full wrath of God (v. 19). Many geographical changes will take place (v. 20) and hail weighing 120 pounds will fall (v. 21).

This earthquake that will shake Jerusalem is further described in Zechariah 14:4b-5:

> *And the mount of Olives shall be cleft in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. And ye shall flee by the valley of my mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azel; yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah; and Jehovah my God shall come, and all the holy ones with you.*

Not only will Jerusalem be split into three divisions, but the Mount of Olives will be split into two parts, creating a valley running east and west. This newly-formed valley will provide a way of escape for the Jewish inhabitants of Jerusalem from the earthquake that will destroy the city. In this way the inhabitants of Jerusalem will be rescued following the deliverance of the other Jews in Bozrah.

Another cataclysmic event that will take place at this time is the fifth worldwide blackout, described in Matthew 24:29:

> *But immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken.*

The earthquake and the blackout of this time are also described in Joel 3:14-17:

> *Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! for the day of Jehovah is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon are darkened, and the stars withdraw their shining. And Jehovah will roar from Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but Jehovah will be a refuge unto his people, and a stronghold to the children of Israel. So shall ye know that I am Jehovah your God, dwelling in Zion my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more.*

With the multitudes defeated in the closing Day of Jehovah in the Valley of Jehoshaphat (v. 14), the blackout will occur (v. 15), as well as the great earthquake (v. 16a). But a refuge will be provided for the Jews from these cataclysmic events (vv. 16b-17) by means of the valley cutting through the Mount of Olives spoken of by Zechariah.
The Great Tribulation and the Campaign of Armageddon will come to an end with these cataclysmic events.

Part IV

The Interval

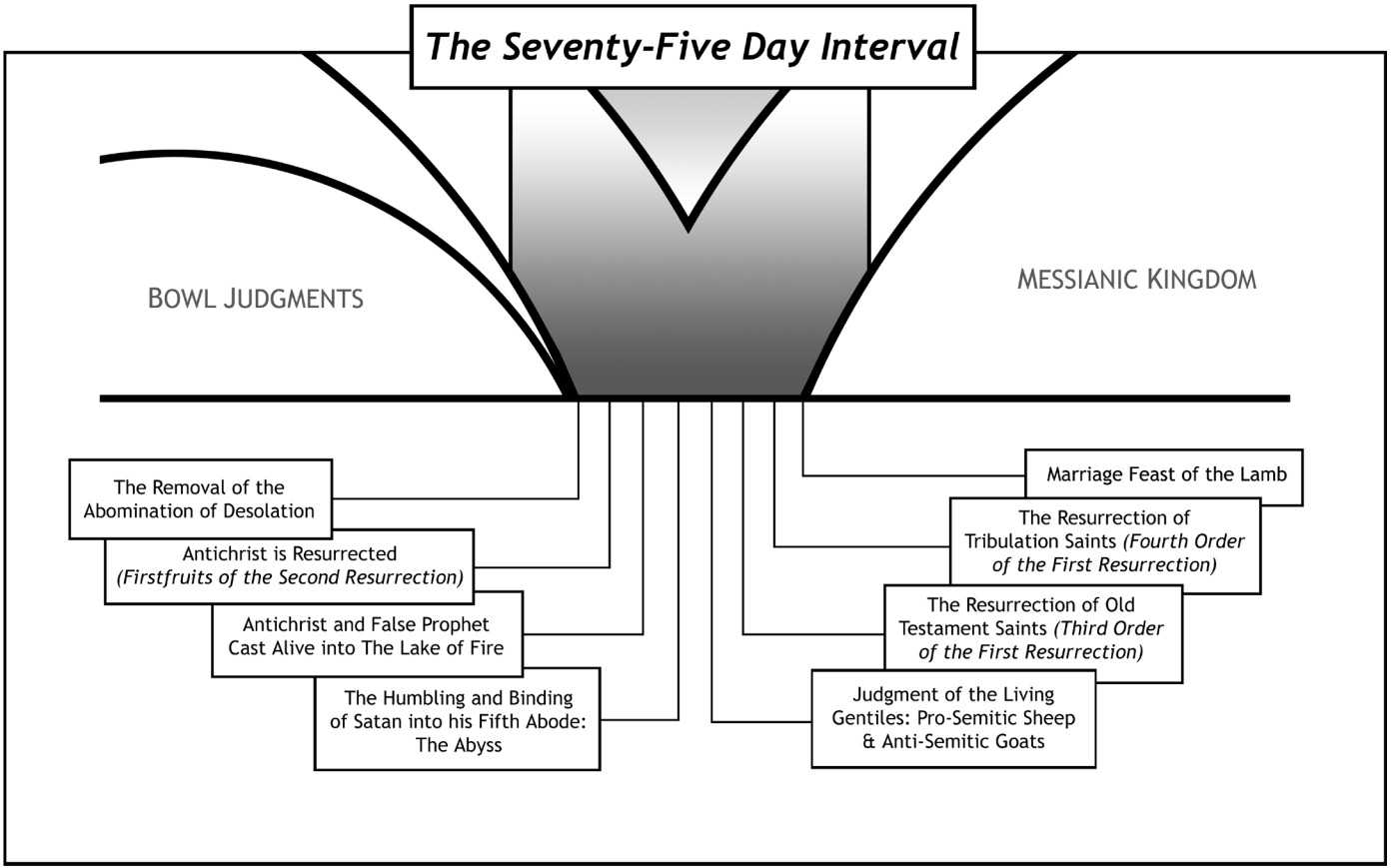

The Seventy-Five Day Interval
BOWL JUDGMENTS
MESSIANIC KINGDOM
The Removal of the Abomination of Desolation
Antichrist is Resurrected (Firstfruits of the Second Resurrection)
Antichrist and False Prophet Cast Alive into The Lake of Fire
The Humbling and Binding of Satan into his Fifth Abode: The Abyss
Marriage Feast of the Lamb
The Resurrection of Tribulation Saints (Fourth Order of the First Resurrection)
The Resurrection of Old Testament Saints (Third Order of the First Resurrection)
Judgment of the Living Gentiles: Pro-Semitic Sheep & Anti-Semitic Goats

Chart #8

FIFTEEN

The Seventy-five Day Interval

The Millennium will not begin the day immediately following the last day of the Great Tribulation because there will be a seventy-five day interval. During this time between the Great Tribulation and the start of the Messianic Age, a number of events will occur. The existence of this interval is demonstrated in Daniel 12:11-12:

> *And from the time that the continual burnt-offering shall be taken away, and the abomination that makes desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he that waits, and comes to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.*

In previous discussions, the figure of 1,260 days has often appeared, which is equivalent to 3½ years. Sometimes it is in reference to the first half of the Tribulation, from the signing of the seven-year covenant to the takeover of the Jewish Temple and the commitment of the Abomination of Desolation. Other times it refers to the second half of the Tribulation, from the Abomination of Desolation to the Second Coming, during which time the Antichrist will rule the world. The demise of the Antichrist and the end of the Tribulation will come 1,260 days after the midpoint of the Tribulation.

In this Daniel passage, two other figures are given. The first is 1,290 days, an addition of thirty days, during which time the Abomination of Desolation remains in the Temple before its removal. The second figure is 1,335 days, which is 45 days beyond the 1,290-day period and 75 days beyond the 1,260-day period. A special blessing is pronounced on those who will make it to the 1,335th day. The blessing is that those who survive until the 75th day of the interval will enter the Messianic Kingdom. That this is indeed a blessing will be seen in this chapter. There will be many who

will fail and die before the 1,335th day comes, although they did survive past the 1,260th day.

A number of events will transpire during the seventy-five day interval, but it is impossible to determine the chronological sequence of these events. Therefore, these events will be studied thematically rather than chronologically.

A. The Removal of the Abomination of Desolation

The event that will signal the beginning of the second half of the Great Tribulation will be the Antichrist's takeover of the Jewish Temple, from which he will declare himself to be the Almighty God. He will then have the False Prophet set up his image in the Temple, and thus commit the Abomination of Desolation. The Antichrist will retain control for 1,260 days, after which he will be killed. But the image which had been made alive will be allowed to continue another thirty days, as Daniel 12:11 states:

> *And from the time that the continual burnt-offering shall be taken away, and the abomination that makes desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.*

The desecration of the Temple is allowed to remain for thirty days beyond the end of the Tribulation. Then it will be destroyed, bringing the Abomination of Desolation to an end.

B. The Antichrist

Regarding this member of the counterfeit trinity, Revelation 19:20 states:

> *And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought the signs in his sight, wherewith he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast and them that worshipped his image: they two were cast alive into the lake of fire that burns with brimstone: . . .*

It is declared that the Antichrist will be cast *alive* into the Lake of Fire.

In the previous chapter, passages were cited that state that the Antichrist will be killed as one of the first casualties of the Second Coming. Therefore, this verse requires that the Antichrist be resurrected at this time and then be cast alive into the Lake of Fire. It is for this reason that Isaiah 14:20 declared that the body of the Antichrist will never see burial.

There is some irony to be found in this fact. As will be seen later in this chapter, the term *the first resurrection* applies to the resurrection of all the righteous, although it comes in stages. The term *the second resurrection* applies to the resurrection of all the damned, and this, too, will come in stages. Jesus was the firstfruits of the first resurrection. The irony to be found here is that he who would be the counterfeit son will be allowed to act out the counterfeit role to completion by becoming the firstfruits of the second resurrection. But the result of his resurrection will be the Lake of Fire.

C. The False Prophet

Also according to Revelation 19:20, the False Prophet—the counterfeit holy spirit, who will have a counterfeit gift of miracles by which he will do his work of deception, calling men to worship the Antichrist, to take upon themselves the mark of the Beast and to worship his image—he, too, will be cast alive into the Lake of Fire.

For the first thousand years that the Lake of Fire will be inhabited, the Antichrist and the False Prophet will be there all by themselves.

D. Satan's Fifth Abode

As for Satan, the counterfeit father, he will be cast into his fifth abode,[1] as described in Revelation 20:1-3:

> *And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, the old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, and cast*

[1] See Appendix I, The Six Abodes of Satan.

> *him into the abyss, and shut it, and sealed it over him, that he should deceive the nations no more, until the thousand years should be finished: after this he must be loosed for a little time.*

This passage records the binding of Satan into his fifth abode. The binder will be a member of the rank of common angels (v. 1), the lowest order of celestial beings, yet he will be able to bind a cherub who was the anointed cherub and sealed up the sum in wisdom and beauty. The duration of Satan's confinement will be one thousand years (v. 2). Verse three spells out the place, purpose, and promise regarding the binding of Satan. As to the place, it will be the Abyss, the temporary place of confinement for fallen angels. As to the purpose, it is that he should no longer be free to do his work of deception among the nations. But the binding is done with the promise that he will be released for a short while to test mankind at least one more time.

E. The Judgment of the Gentiles

Though a great many Gentiles will be killed through the course of the Tribulation, and Gentile armies will suffer slaughter in the Campaign of Armageddon, a number will still be living. All these will now be gathered together for a judgment described in two passages of Scripture. The first passage is in Joel 3:1-3:

> *For, behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring back the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I will gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat; and I will execute judgment upon them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations: and they have parted my land, and have cast lots for my people, and have given a boy for a harlot, and sold a girl for wine, that they may drink.*

The timing of this judgment is given as being in conjunction with the final restoration of Israel (v. 1). All the Gentiles will be gathered into the Valley of Jehoshaphat for the judgment (v. 2a). The very place where the Campaign of Armageddon will end is the same place where the Gentiles will be judged. A judgment of this nature, resulting in a destiny of

eternal life or eternal Hell, cannot be taken as a national judgment, but is an individual one. The word translated *nations* also means *Gentiles*, and this is the way it should be translated. The basis for this judgment will be anti-Semitism or pro-Semitism (vv. 2b-3). All these Gentiles will be judged on the basis of their treatment of the Jews during the Great Tribulation. The sins committed against Israel listed in this indictment are: *first*, scattering the Jews (in the middle of the Tribulation); *second*, parting the land (Campaign of Armageddon); and *third*, selling the Jews into slavery (Zech. 14:1-2). Each Gentile living at that time will be judged on the basis of his participation in or his refusal to participate in these deeds.

The results of this judgment are given in the second passage in Matthew 25:31-46. The judge, the judgment, and those judged are identified in 25:31-33:

> *But when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all the nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats; and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.*

The judge (v. 31) will be none other than the Messiah, Who will sit on a throne encompassed by His glory in the Valley of Jehoshaphat. All the Gentiles still living will be gathered before Him for the judgment (v. 32). The Greek word translated *nations* is also the common word for *Gentiles*. The latter is the way it should be taken, for this is an individual judgment on the basis of anti-Semitism or pro-Semitism. In this judgment, all the Gentiles will be divided into two camps: the pro-Semitic *sheep* camp or the anti-Semitic *goat* camp (v. 33).

Matthew 25:34-40 concerns the pro-Semitic sheep:

> *Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry, and ye gave me to eat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we you hungry, and fed you? or athirst, and gave you drink? And when saw we you a stranger, and took*

> *you in? or naked, and clothed you? And when saw we you sick, or in prison, and came unto you? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me.*

The pro-Semites are those who will provide help for Jesus' *brethren*, the Jews, during the Great Tribulation, a time when it will be very dangerous to do so. The Jews who will have to flee into the wilderness without anything with them will often be provided with food, clothing and shelter by the sheep Gentiles. They will identify themselves with the Jews by visiting the Jews in prison and will perform other acts of kindness to the Jews. Because of these acts, they will be allowed to enter the Messianic Kingdom (v. 34). It is the sheep Gentiles who will be involved in the destruction of Babylon (Is. 13:1-5). They will attain the 1,335th day and will be the ones who will populate Gentile nations in the Messianic Kingdom.

As for the anti-Semitic goat Gentiles, Matthew 25:41-45 states:

> *Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand. Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was hungry, and ye did not give me to eat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer, saying, Lord, when saw we you hungry, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto you? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of these least, ye did it not unto me.*

The anti-Semites, who will aid the Antichrist in the program of Jewish destruction, will be killed and sent to Hell (v. 41). They are the ones who will fail to attain the 1,335th day and, consequently, lose out on the millennial blessing.

The basis of the judgment will not be salvation or lack of it, but anti-Semitism or pro-Semitism. This fact stirs up a question when compared with 25:46:

> *And these shall go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous into eternal life.*

The goats will be sent to Hell, whereas the sheep will not only enter the Kingdom (v. 34), but they will also inherit eternal life. Is their salvation, then, based on their works, be they anti-Semitic or pro-Semitic? Not at all. The Scriptures make it quite clear that salvation is always by grace through faith totally apart from works. During the Tribulation, the Jews will become the dividing line for those who are believers and for those who are not. Only believers will dare to violate the rules of the Antichrist and aid the Jews. Their pro-Semitic acts will be the result of their saved state. As James would say it, they will show their faith by their works. But the unbelievers will demonstrate their unbelief by their anti-Semitic acts. The judgment of the Gentiles, then, will determine who among the Gentiles will be allowed to enter the Messianic Kingdom. Only believing Gentiles will be allowed, and the evidence of their faith will be their pro-Semitic works.[2]

F. The Resurrection of the Old Testament Saints

The Rapture will include only the Church saints and it will occur before the Great Tribulation. Later, during the seventy-five day interval, the Old Testament saints will be resurrected. This is stated by two Old Testament passages, the first being in Isaiah 26:19:

> *Your dead shall live; my dead bodies shall arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust; for your dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast forth the dead.*

This is a general statement of the fact that a resurrection will some day take place. A clearer picture is found in the second passage in Daniel 12:2:

> *And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.*

A more literal rendering of this passage would read as follows: "And [at that time] *many* [of your people] shall awake or be separated *out from among* the sleepers in the earth's dust. These who awake shall be unto life everlasting, but *those* [the rest of the sleepers who do not awake at this

[2] For more details see Appendix V, The Olivet Discourse.

time] shall be unto shame and contempt everlasting."

This passage draws a clear distinction between the resurrection of the righteous and the resurrection of the unrighteous. Only the righteous saints will be resurrected at this time in order to partake of the blessings of the Millennial Kingdom. These are the *friends of the bridegroom* (Jn. 3:29) who will be invited to the wedding feast with which the Millennium will begin.

In the context of Daniel 12:2, Daniel is speaking of events after the Tribulation and, therefore, this is the time that the Old Testament saints will be resurrected.

G. The Resurrection of the Tribulation Saints

Not only will there be a resurrection of Old Testament saints, but also a resurrection of those saints who will be killed in the course of the Great Tribulation according to Revelation 20:4:

> *And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the word of God, and such as worshipped not the beast, neither his image, and received not the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they lived, and reigned with Christ a thousand years.*

In this verse, John sees two groups of saints co-reigning with Messiah. First are those to whom *judgment was given*. The judgment spoken of here is the Judgment Seat of the Messiah. These saints, then, will be the Church saints who will be resurrected at the Rapture of the Church and will receive their rewards in the course of the judgment.

But the second group of saints that John sees are identified as those who have been beheaded because they did not worship the Antichrist or his image, nor were they willing to consent to receive the mark of the Beast. Obviously, then, these cannot be anyone else but the Tribulation saints and they, too, will be resurrected at this time.

H. The First Resurrection

The first resurrection involves the resurrection of believers only. It is recorded in Revelation 20:5-6:

> *The rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years should be finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that has part in the first resurrection: over these the second death has no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.*

According to verse five, the resurrection of the Tribulation saints completes the first resurrection, and it is separated from the completion of the second resurrection by one thousand years. The point of verse six is that the first resurrection involves believers only, and that is why it is blessed and holy to be a participant in the first resurrection.

However, the first resurrection is not a general one-time resurrection of righteous ones, but comes in stages in an orderly progression, according to I Corinthians 15:20-23:

> *But now has Christ been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of them that are asleep. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; then they that are Christ's, at his coming.*

After declaring that a resurrection of the righteous will occur (vv. 20-22), Paul states that the righteous will be resurrected *each in his own order* (v. 23). The word translated *order* is a military term used for a sequence of troops of soldiers marching in a procession or in battle. There is one troop division first, followed by another troop division, and so on. The point is that all the righteous will not be resurrected at the same time, but rather in a definite sequential order. The first resurrection includes the following five stages: The *first* was the resurrection of Jesus (v. 23)—He is the firstfruits of the first resurrection; the *second* is the resurrection of the Church saints at the Rapture of the Church (I Thes. 4:16) prior to the Great Tribulation; the *third* will be the resurrection of the Two Witnesses in the middle of the Tribulation; *fourth* will come the Old Testament saints (Is. 26:19; Dan. 12:2) during the seventy-five day interval after the Tribulation; and *fifth*, the Tribulation saints (Rev. 20:4). The resurrection

of the Tribulation saints completes the first resurrection. There will be no such thing as a resurrection of millennial saints for reasons to be discussed in Chapter 17, General Characteristics of the Messianic Kingdom.

I. The Marriage Feast of the Lamb

The fourth stage of the Jewish wedding system is the marriage feast which lasted seven days. As noted earlier, while the Church is the Bride, the Old Testament and Tribulation saints make up *the friends of the bridegroom*. Now that they have been resurrected, the wedding feast can take place. The invitation has already gone out in Revelation 19:9:

> *And he says unto me, Write, Blessed are they that are bidden to the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he says unto me, These are true words of God.*

The result of the invitation is their resurrection and the wedding feast, which will also last at least seven days, and will either conclude the seventy-five day interval, or may inaugurate the Messianic Kingdom itself for its first seven days—perhaps the more likely scenario, since the wedding feast parable was connected with the Kingdom. One such wedding feast parable is found in Matthew 22:1-14:

> *And Jesus answered and spoke again in parables unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a certain king, who made a marriage feast for his son, and sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the marriage feast: and they would not come. Again he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them that are bidden, Behold, I have made ready my dinner; my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come to the marriage feast. But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his merchandise; and the rest laid hold on his servants, and treated them shamefully, and killed them. But the king was wroth; and he sent his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. Then says he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they that were bidden were not worthy. Go ye therefore unto the partings of the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage feast. And those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and*

> *good: and the wedding was filled with guests. But when the king came in to behold the guests, he saw there a man who had not on a wedding-garment: and he says unto him, Friend, how came you in hither not having a wedding-garment? And he was speechless. Then the king said to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and cast him out into the outer darkness; there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few chosen.*

The point of the parable is that those who were originally bidden to the wedding feast, the Pharisees and the Jewish generation of Jesus' day, will not partake of the feast (the Kingdom) due to their commitment of the unpardonable sin. However, the Jews of the Tribulation generation will. But this will include only the believers; the unbelievers will be cast *into the outer darkness* and excluded from the Messianic Kingdom.

A second parable is in Matthew 25:1-13:

> *Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, who took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were foolish, and five were wise. For the foolish, when they took their lamps, took no oil with them: but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. Now while the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. But at midnight there is a cry, Behold, the bridegroom! Come ye forth to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are going out. But the wise answered, saying, Peradventure there will not be enough for us and you: go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went away to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage feast: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know not the day nor the hour.*

The contrast here is not between two types of believers, but between believers and unbelievers. The believers (wise virgins) have oil, a symbol of the Holy Spirit, while unbelievers (foolish virgins) *take no oil with them*. Thus the foolish ones were excluded from the marriage feast (the Messianic

Kingdom), for them the Lord *knew not*, while the wise virgins *went in with him to the marriage feast*. Based upon the application of the parable given in Matthew 25:31-46, these two sets of virgins represent believing and unbelieving Gentiles in the Tribulation. The first parable deals with Jews who will or will not enter the Kingdom, while this one deals with Gentiles who will or will not enter the Kingdom.[3]

Isaiah also connects a feast with the Kingdom and with a resurrection from the dead in Isaiah 25:6-8:

> *And in this mountain will Jehovah of hosts make unto all peoples a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering that covers all peoples, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He has swallowed up death for ever; and the Lord Jehovah will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the reproach of his people will he take away from off all the earth: for Jehovah has spoken it.*

In a sense then, there will be a double wedding feast: One for the Church as the Bride of the Messiah and one for Israel as the remarried Wife of Jehovah.[4]

These are the events of the seventy-five day interval leading up that long, special period of history the faithful look forward to—the Millennium or the Messianic Age.

---

[3] For details see Appendix V, The Olivet Discourse.

[4] For details see Appendix III, The Wife of Jehovah and the Bride of Messiah.

Part V

The Messianic Kingdom

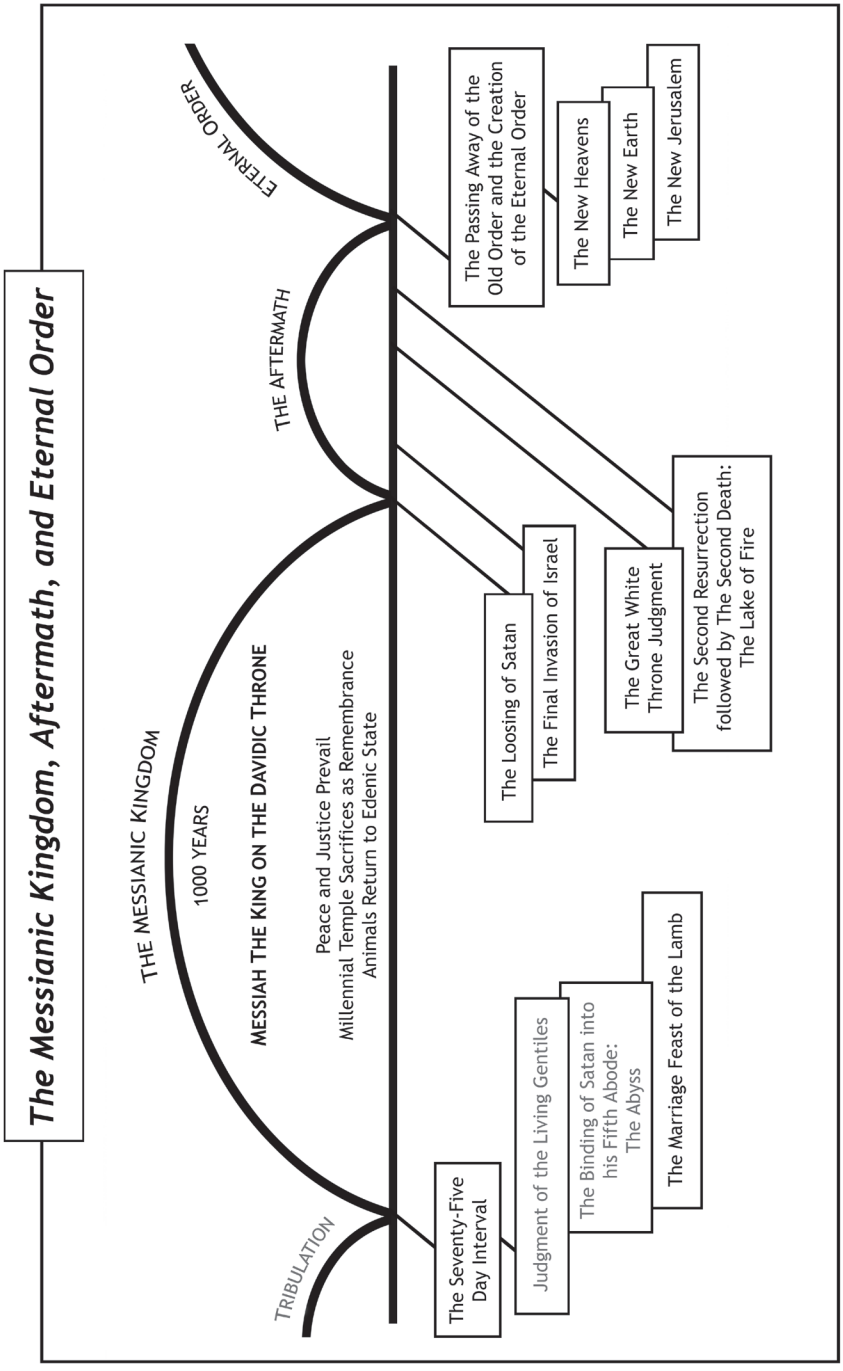

The Messianic Kingdom, Aftermath, and Eternal Order
TRIBULATION
THE MESSIANIC KINGDOM
1000 YEARS
MESSIAH THE KING ON THE DAVIDIC THRONE
Peace and Justice Prevail
Millennial Temple Sacrifices as Remembrance
Animals Return to Edenic State
THE AFTERMATH
ETERNAL ORDER
The Seventy-Five Day Interval
Judgment of the Living Gentiles
The Binding of Satan into his Fifth Abode: The Abyss
The Marriage Feast of the Lamb
The Loosing of Satan
The Final Invasion of Israel
The Great White Throne Judgment
The Second Resurrection followed by The Second Death: The Lake of Fire
The Passing Away of the Old Order and the Creation of the Eternal Order
The New Heavens
The New Earth
The New Jerusalem

Chart #9

SIXTEEN

The Basis for the Belief in the Messianic Kingdom

Premillennialists have often been criticized for basing their belief in a Millennium entirely on one passage of Scripture, Revelation 20. Because it is found in a book well noted for its high use of symbols, they say it is foolish to take the *one thousand years* literally. But that is hardly a valid criticism.

To begin with, while it is true that the Book of Revelation uses many symbols, it has already been shown that the meaning of all those symbols is explained either within the Book of Revelation itself or elsewhere in the Scriptures. Furthermore, never are years used in a symbolic way in this book. If they are symbolic, the symbolism is nowhere explained. The mention of 1,260 days, 42 months, and 3½ years are all literal and not symbolic. Hence, there is no need to take the one thousand years as anything but literal years. The desire to spiritualize the text always places the burden of proof on the interpreter. Without objective proof it will result in a subjective interpretation.

It is, of course, true that the figure of *one thousand years* is only found in Revelation 20. But it is recorded six different times in this one text, and if repetition tries to do anything, it certainly endeavors to make a point.

While it is true that the *millennium* (that is, one thousand years) is found only in Revelation 20, the belief in the Messianic Kingdom does not rest on this passage alone. In fact, it hardly rests on it at all. The *basis* for the belief in the Messianic Kingdom is twofold. *First*: there are the unfulfilled promises of the Jewish covenants, promises that can only be fulfilled in a Messianic Kingdom. *Second*: there are the unfulfilled prophecies of the Jewish prophets. There are numerous prophecies of the Old Testament that speak of the coming of the Messiah Who will reign on David's Throne, and rule over a peaceful Kingdom. There is a great amount

of material in the Old Testament on the Messianic Kingdom, and the belief in a Messianic Kingdom rests on the basis of a literal interpretation of this massive material.

The only real contribution that the Book of Revelation makes to the knowledge of the Kingdom is to disclose just how long the Messianic Kingdom will last—namely one thousand years—for which the term *Millennium* is used. This is the one key truth concerning the Kingdom that was not revealed in the Old Testament.

It is in light of this that it is possible to understand why so much of the book is spent on the Great Tribulation and so little on the Millennium. While much of the material in Revelation 4-19 is found scattered in the pages of the Old Testament, it is impossible to place these events in chronological sequence using only the Old Testament. The Book of Revelation provides the framework by which this can be done. A great portion of the Book of Revelation was used to accomplish this goal.

On the other hand, all of the various features and facets of the Messianic Kingdom have already been revealed in the Old Testament. It portrays the general characteristics of life in the Kingdom, which do not raise the problem of an order of sequence. Hence, there was no reason to spend a great deal of time on the Messianic Kingdom in the Book of Revelation. Most of what was needed to be revealed was already known from the Old Testament.

However, there were two things about the Messianic Kingdom which were not revealed in the Old Testament. The first was the length of the Messianic Kingdom. While the Old Testament prophets foresaw a long period of time of a peaceful messianic reign, they did not reveal just how long this would last. To answer this question, the Book of Revelation states that it will be exactly one thousand years. A second thing that was unknown from the Old Testament prophets was the circumstances by which the Kingdom would come to an end and how this would lead into the Eternal Order. This is also revealed by the Book of Revelation. These two items are all that Revelation 20 added to the knowledge of the Messianic Kingdom. The belief in a Messianic Kingdom does not rest on this passage, but is based on the numerous prophecies of the Old Testament prophets.

Another basis for the belief in a coming Kingdom rests on the four unconditional, unfulfilled covenants God made with Israel. These covenants

are unconditional and so rely solely on God for their fulfillment and not on Israel. They are also unfulfilled, and since God is One Who keeps His promises, they must be fulfilled in the future. They can only be fulfilled within the framework of a Messianic Kingdom or a Millennial Kingdom. More will be said about these covenants in chapter 19, Israel in the Messianic Kingdom, but the main points will be summarized here.

The first of these is the Abrahamic Covenant, which promised an eternal Seed developing into a nation that will possess the Promised Land with some definite borders. While that nation—the Jews—continues to exist, never in Jewish history have they possessed all of the Promised Land. For this promise to be fulfilled, there must be a future Kingdom. Besides, the possession of the Land was not merely promised to Abraham's seed, but to Abraham personally when God said, *to you will I give it, and to your seed for ever* (Gen. 13:15). For God to fulfill His promise to Abraham (as well as to Isaac and Jacob), there must be a future Kingdom.

The second covenant is the Palestinian Covenant, or Land Covenant, that spoke of a worldwide regathering of the Jews and repossession of the Land following their dispersion. While the dispersion has already occurred and is in effect today, the regathering and repossession of the Land still awaits fulfillment in the future. This, too, requires a future Kingdom.

The Davidic Covenant is the third covenant, and it promised four eternal things: an eternal house (dynasty), an eternal throne, an eternal kingdom, and one eternal Person. The Dynasty became eternal because it culminated in a Person Who is Himself eternal: Jesus the Messiah. For that reason the Throne and Kingdom will be eternal as well. But Jesus has never yet sat on the Throne of David ruling over a Kingdom of Israel. The reestablishment of the Davidic Throne and Messiah's rule over the Kingdom still awaits a future fulfillment. It requires a future kingdom.

The last of these covenants is the New Covenant, which spoke of the national regeneration and salvation of Israel, encompassing each individual Jewish member of that nation. This, too, awaits its final fulfillment and requires a future kingdom.

It is the extensive prophetic writings, as well as all of these covenants, that provide the basis for the belief in a future Messianic Kingdom, and not merely one chapter of a highly symbolic book.

To summarize, the basis for the belief in a Messianic Kingdom is twofold: the unfulfilled promises of the Jewish covenants, and the unfulfilled prophecies of the Jewish prophets.

SEVENTEEN

General Characteristics of the Messianic Kingdom

A great many of the Old Testament prophets directed their attention to the details of the Messianic Kingdom, providing an overall, comprehensive picture of life during that time. This chapter will be concerned with those passages dealing with the general characteristics of the Messianic Kingdom that will be true for both Jews and Gentiles alike.

A. Psalm 15:1-5

> *Jehovah, who shall sojourn in your tabernacle? Who shall dwell in your holy hill? He that walks uprightly, and works righteousness, And speaks truth in his heart; He that slanders not with his tongue, Nor does evil to his friend, Nor takes up a reproach against his neighbor; In whose eyes a reprobate is despised, But who honors them that fear Jehovah; He that swears to his own hurt, and changes not; He that puts not out his money to interest; Nor takes reward against the innocent. He that does these things shall never be moved.*

This passage describes the righteousness that will characterize a citizen in the Kingdom. Although not every individual in the Kingdom will necessarily be characterized with this kind of righteousness, for reasons to be discussed later in this chapter, most will be.

B. Psalm 24:1-6

> *The earth is Jehovah's, and the fulness thereof; The world,*

> *and they that dwell therein. For he has founded it upon the seas, And established it upon the floods. Who shall ascend into the hill of Jehovah? And who shall stand in his holy place? He that has clean hands, and a pure heart; Who has not lifted up his soul unto falsehood, And has not sworn deceitfully. He shall receive a blessing from Jehovah, And righteousness from the God of his salvation. This is the generation of them that seek after him, That seek your face, even Jacob.*

This passage describes the establishment of the Kingdom and the righteousness that will characterize a man who will be rightly related to God at that time.

C. Isaiah 2:2-4

> *And it shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many peoples shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem. And he will judge between the nations, and will decide concerning many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.*

In this passage, Isaiah describes one of the major characteristics of the Messianic Kingdom, that of universal peace. While differences between nations will arise, such differences will no longer be settled by military conflicts, but only by the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem. Even the art of warfare will be forgotten.

D. Isaiah 11:6-9

> *And the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea.*

The universal peace described in the earlier passage will extend even to the animal kingdom. All animals will return to the Edenic state and become vegetarians (vv. 6-7). The oldest of enemies, man and snake, will be able to live in compatibility in that day (v. 8), for the knowledge of God will permeate throughout the entire world, affecting man and animal alike (v. 9).

E. Isaiah 65:17-25

> *For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former things shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create; for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people; and there shall be heard in her no more the voice of weeping and the voice of crying. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that has not filled his days; for the child shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner being a hundred years old shall be accursed. And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree shall be the days of my people, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for calamity; for they are the seed of the blessed of Jehovah,*

> *and their offspring with them. And it shall come to pass that, before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox; and dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, says Jehovah.*

This passage begins with the announcement of the creation of new heavens and a new earth (v. 17). These new heavens and new earth are not to be confused with those of Revelation 21-22. The latter describes the new heavens and new earth of the Eternal Order, while the Isaiah passage describes those of the Messianic Kingdom which will be a renovation of the present heavens and earth. Those of the Revelation are not a renovation, but a brand new order. Hence, for the Millennium, there will be a total renovation of the heavens and the earth. The fact that the term *create* is used shows that this renovation will be a miraculous one, possible by God alone. The result of this renovation will be a continuation of many things of the old order and a number of new things. A good example of the old and the new is to be seen in what the Scriptures say about the Land of Israel. Israel will also undergo the renovation process. Some things of the old order will remain, such as the Mediterranean Sea and the Dead Sea. But a number of things will be brand new, such as the exceedingly high mountain (the highest in the world) in the center of the country. Following this announcement of new heavens and a new earth, there is a description of the millennial Jerusalem (vv. 18-19). The millennial Jerusalem will be studied in detail in chapter 19, Israel in the Messianic Kingdom.

Verse 20 is especially significant, for it discusses life and death in the Kingdom. This verse teaches several things. *First*: there will no longer be any infant mortality in the Millennium; everyone who is born in the Kingdom will reach a certain age. *Second*: the specific age at which one may die is the age of one hundred. With infant mortality removed, everyone born in the Millennium will live at least until his hundredth year of life. Because of the prolongation of life in the Millennium, those who die at the age of one hundred will be considered as having died young. *Third*: this verse limits the people dying at the age of one hundred to those who are sinners; namely, unbelievers, as only they would be considered *accursed*. So, then, death in the Kingdom will be for unbelievers only.

Comparing this passage with what is stated about salvation in other passages, the entire concept of life and death in the Kingdom can be

summarized as follows. When the Kingdom begins, all natural men, both Jews and Gentiles, will be believers. The Jews in their entirety will be saved just prior to the Second Coming of the Messiah. All unbelieving Gentiles (goats) will be killed during the seventy-five day interval between the Tribulation and the Millennium, and only believing Gentiles (sheep) will be able to enter the Kingdom. However, in the process of time, there will be birth in the Kingdom of both Jews and Gentiles. These newly born, natural people will continue to inherit the sin nature from their natural parents and will also be in need of regeneration. Although Satan is confined, thus reducing temptation, the sin nature is quite capable of rebelling against God apart from satanic activity. In time, there will be unsaved people living in the Kingdom in need of regeneration. As in the past, the means of salvation will be by grace through faith and the content of faith will be the death of Messiah for sin and His subsequent resurrection. Those born in the Kingdom will have until their hundredth year to believe. If they do not, they will die in their hundredth year. The unbeliever will not be able to live past his first century of life. However, if they do believe, they will live throughout the Millennium and never die. Thus, death in the Millennium will be for unbelievers only. This is why the Bible nowhere speaks of a resurrection of millennial saints. This is why the resurrection of the Tribulation saints is said to complete the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4-6). It is also clear from the New Covenant of Jeremiah 31:31-34 that there will be no Jewish unbelievers in the Kingdom; all Jews born during the Kingdom will accept the Messiah by their hundredth year. Unbelief will be among the Gentiles only and, therefore, death will exist only among the Gentiles.

Verses 21-24 continue to describe life in the Kingdom as a time of personal peace and prosperity. It will be a time of building and planting. He who builds and plants is guaranteed the enjoyment of the labors of his hands, for many of the effects of the curse will be removed (vv. 21-22a). Life will be characterized by longevity (v. 22b), absence of calamity and turmoil (v. 23), and instantaneous response from God (v. 24). As in Isaiah 11:6-9, the animal kingdom will be at peace with each other and with man (v. 25).

F. Micah 4:1-5

> *But in the latter days it shall come to pass, that the mountains of Jehovah's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and peoples shall flow unto it. And many nations shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths. For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem; and he will judge between many peoples, and will decide concerning strong nations afar off: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig-tree; and none shall make them afraid; for the mouth of Jehovah of hosts has spoken it. For all the peoples walk every one in the name of his god; and we will walk in the name of Jehovah our God for ever and ever.*

The first three verses of this passage are the same as those found in Isaiah 2:2-4 that speak of the Mountain of Jehovah's House becoming the center of attention to the world's Gentile population, the Kingdom being characterized as a time of messianic teaching, and the absence of war as universal peace permeates the entire Kingdom. Micah adds that the Kingdom will be a time of personal peace and prosperity (v. 4), with Israel's total allegiance being to God (v. 5).

Summary

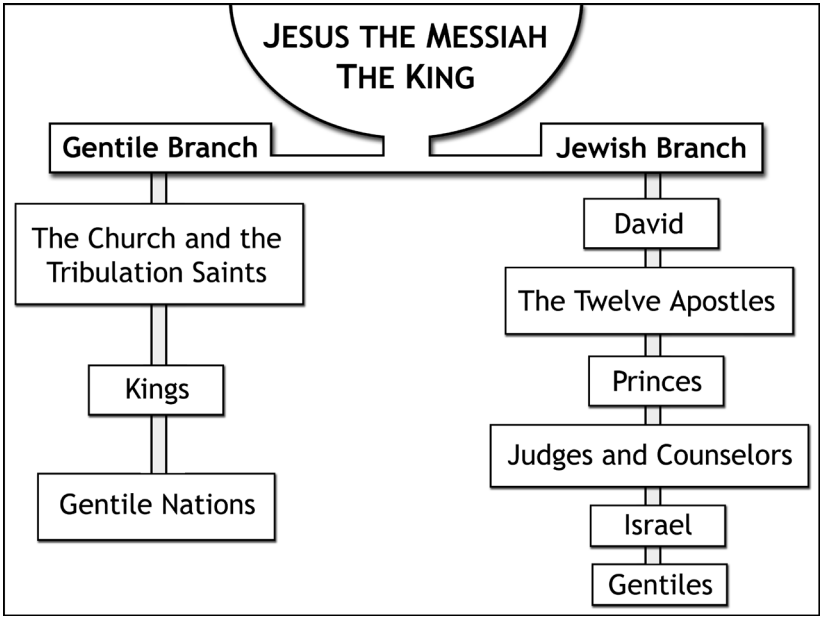
To summarize the general characteristics of the Messianic Kingdom, it will be a time when Satan will be bound, causing a reduction of both sin and death, though neither of these two will be eliminated at that time. It will be a time of universal and personal prosperity and peace between man and man, between animal and animal, and between man and animal, with many (but not all) of the effects of the curse removed. It will be a time characterized by truth, holiness and righteousness, with justice continually being dispersed from Jerusalem. It will be a time of

labor in building and planting, with guaranteed results and promised enjoyment of these labors.

EIGHTEEN

The Government of the Messianic Kingdom

The Messianic Kingdom will be administered through an absolute monarchy with a definite chain of command and lines of authority. The absolute monarch will be the Person of Jesus the Messiah. The delegated authority will be split into two branches: a Jewish branch of government and a Gentile branch, each in turn having a chain of command. It can be charted out as follows:



This chapter will be concerned with various Scriptures that speak of the system of government in the Kingdom.

A. The King: The Lord Jesus the Messiah

That the Messiah is to sit upon the Throne of David and rule in a kingdom over Israel with a dominion extending over all the Gentiles is the clear teaching of the Old and New Testaments. The Davidic Covenant upon which the physical reign of the Messiah is based will be discussed in the next chapter. In this chapter, only those passages that develop the Davidic Covenant and those that speak of the Messiah as king over a literal kingdom will be dealt with.

1. The Establishment of the Throne

That it is in the program of God to set up His Son as the King in Jerusalem is the clear teaching of Psalm 2:6-8:

> *Yet I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will tell of the decree: Jehovah said unto me, You are my son; This day have I begotten you. Ask of me, and I will give you the nations for your inheritance, And the uttermost parts of the earth for your possession.*

Although the Throne of Messiah will be established in Jerusalem, His dominion will not stop at the border of Israel, but will extend throughout the entire earth with every Gentile nation falling under His domain.

The Messiah's ruling upon the reestablished Throne of David and ruling over a kingdom is the theme of Isaiah 9:6-7:

> *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it and justice and with righteousness from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this.*

A child is born into the Jewish world Who is a Son of the House of David upon Whom the reins of government will rest (v. 6a). Yet names

are given to this child that can only be true of God Himself (v. 6b). The eternality of the Davidic Dynasty, Throne, and Kingdom is assured, for it rests in the God-Man. As to His humanity, He is a descendant of David. As to His deity, He is eternal and so is His Throne. With these facts clearly established, Isaiah proceeds to describe the establishment of the rule of the Messianic King. The government that will be set up will increase in authority and in peace, and there will be no end to the Throne of David or of the rule of the Messiah, for it is the God-Man Who will establish it and Who will uphold it. It will be characterized by justice and righteousness forever. The guarantee that it will be so established is the burning zeal of God, a zeal that will continue to burn until the Kingdom is realized. Because God's zeal intends to perform it, it will surely come about.

To this statement, Isaiah 16:5 adds:

> *And a throne shall be established in lovingkindness; and one shall sit thereon in truth, in the tent of David, judging, and seeking justice, and swift to do righteousness.*

As if to reiterate his previous statement, Isaiah declares again that a throne will surely be established on the basis of God's loyal love. The One sitting on the Throne will be a member of the House of David Who will be characterized by truth. He will be the King and Judge, ensuring that justice is carried out—a justice springing from the righteousness of the King.

Very similar to Isaiah are two prophecies found in Jeremiah. The first is Jeremiah 23:5-6:

> *Behold, the days come, says Jehovah, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called: Jehovah our righteousness.*

Again, there is a descendant of David Who will sit on David's Throne. Yet this descendant is called *Jehovah our righteousness*, so the One sitting on David's Throne is none other than the God-Man. And because it is the God-Man, His reign will be characterized by wisdom, justice, and righteousness. It is in Him that the security of Israel will lie.

The second passage, Jeremiah 33:14-17, adds:

> *Behold, the days come, says Jehovah, that I will perform that good word which I have spoken concerning the house of Israel and concerning the house of Judah. In those days, and at that time, will I cause a Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely; and this is the name whereby he shall be called: Jehovah our righteousness. For thus says Jehovah: David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel; . . .*

Beginning with the reaffirmation of God's intention to fulfill His covenant with David (v. 14), Jeremiah restates the basic points of his statements in 23:5-6 (vv. 15-16). Under no circumstances will the House of David be allowed to become extinct (v. 17). The rest of Jeremiah 33 continues to reaffirm God's intention to fulfill all the conditions of the Davidic Covenant, and these passages will be dealt with in the next chapter.

Though the Throne of the Messiah is to be established in Jerusalem, the reign of the Messianic King will extend over the entire earth, according to Zechariah 14:9:

> *And Jehovah shall be King over all the earth: in that day shall Jehovah be one, and his name one.*

In that day, Zechariah points out, the Messiah will be the head of the world and will be considered by all humanity to be the one God.

That the reestablishment of the Davidic Throne with the Messiah reigning over the Kingdom of Israel is not strictly an Old Testament doctrine is clear from Luke 1:30-33:

> *And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for you have found favor with God. And behold, you shall conceive in your womb, and bring forth a son, and shall call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.*

After declaring to Mary that she is to give birth to a son in spite of her virginity (vv. 30-31), Gabriel goes on to explain the future authority of

that Son. As in the Isaiah and Jeremiah passages, the Son will be born into the Jewish world and is to sit on David's Throne as the God-Man (v. 32). As to His deity, He is the Son of God, but as to His humanity, He is a descendant of David. The Son will be given the Throne of David by divine appointment. He is to reign over Israel, and there is to be no end to His rule (v. 33). This announcement of Gabriel concerning the establishment of Jesus as a King on David's Throne is clearly rooted in the prophecies of the Davidic Covenant and in the prophecies of the Old Testament.

2. The Character of His Reign

A number of passages portray the characteristics of the reign of the Messianic King. One major characteristic, stemming from the absolute monarchy that will exist, is that He will rule with a rod of iron. Revelation 12:5 states:

> *And she was delivered of a son, a man child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and unto his throne.*

This is reaffirmed by Revelation 19:15:

> *And out of his mouth proceeds a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treads the winepress of the fierceness of the wrath of God, the Almighty.*

This iron-handed rule is rooted in Psalm 2:9 and will be a necessity due to the fact that nations will exist and the people populating them will still have their sin nature. It has already been pointed out in the previous chapter that, after the first generation, there will be unbelievers present in the Kingdom. The natural outworking of this sin nature will have to be restrained. The Kingdom will not be a democracy, but an absolute monarchy. The reign of the Messianic King will be a strict one, and the righteous and just laws emanating from Jerusalem will have to be obeyed.

The beginning of His reign will be marked by a procession of the King into the millennial Jerusalem described in Psalm 24:7-10:

> *Lift up your heads, O ye gates; And be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; And the King of glory will come in. Who*

is the King of glory? Jehovah strong and mighty, Jehovah mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; Yea, lift them up, ye everlasting doors; And the King of glory will come in. Who is this King of glory? Jehovah of hosts, He is the King of glory.

An extended treatment of the character of His reign is in Psalm 72:1-19:

Give the king your judgments, O God, And your righteousness unto the king's son. He will judge your people with righteousness, And your poor with justice. The mountains shall bring peace to the people, And the hills, in righteousness. He will judge the poor of the people, He will save the children of the needy, And will break in pieces the oppressor. They shall fear you while the sun endures, And so long as the moon, throughout all generations. He will come down like rain upon the mown grass, As showers that water the earth. In his days shall the righteous flourish, And abundance of peace, till the moon be no more. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, And from the River unto the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; And his enemies shall lick the dust. The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall render tribute: The kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him; All nations shall serve him: For he will deliver the needy when he cries, And the poor, that has no helper. He will have pity on the poor and needy, And the souls of the needy he will save. He will redeem their soul from oppression and violence; And precious will their blood be in his sight: And they shall live; and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba: And men shall pray for him continually; They shall bless him all the day long. There shall be abundance of grain in the earth upon the top of the mountains; The fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: And they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth. His name shall endure for ever; His name shall be continued as long as the sun: And men shall be blessed in him; All nations shall call him happy. Blessed be Jehovah God, the God of Israel, Who only does wondrous things: And blessed be his glorious name for ever; And let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen, and Amen.

This entire Psalm describes the reign of the righteous King. His reign will be characterized by justice, holiness, and righteousness so that the innocent will receive justice, while the guilty will be condemned (vv. 1-7). The extent of His domain will clearly be universal and international (vv. 8-11). It will extend from *sea to sea*, a reference to the western (Mediterranean Sea) and eastern (Dead Sea) boundaries of the millennial Israel. Furthermore, it will extend from *the River*, that is, the Euphrates, which is the prophesied northern boundary of the restored Jewish State. One would expect the next phrase to describe the southern boundary as the "brook of Egypt," but instead, the Psalmist writes *unto the ends of the earth*. The point being made is that although the Throne is set up in the Land of Israel, as seen by the mention of the western, eastern, and northern boundaries, the rule will not be confined to Israel alone. It will overflow the boundaries of Israel, reaching to the ends of the earth (v. 8). His friends and enemies alike will give obeisance to Him (v. 9), and all other kings among the nations will subject themselves to His authority (vv. 10-11). Because He will rule with a rod of iron and in justice, holiness and righteousness, any and all injustices against the righteous will be severely rectified, and the righteous will be exalted (vv. 12-15). His reign will be further characterized with an abundance of productivity (v. 16). All will be blessed in the King and they will bless Him, for He is the eternal God-Man (vv. 17-19).

Isaiah 11:1-5 provides yet another description of the character of His reign:

> *And there shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots shall bear fruit: and the Spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of Jehovah; and his delight shall be in the fear of Jehovah; and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither decide after the hearing of his ears; but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his waist, and faithfulness the girdle of his loins.*

Isaiah begins by describing the origin of the King, namely that of the

House of David (v. 1). He is endowed with the fullness of the Holy Spirit depicted by the sevenfold manifestations of the Spirit of God (v. 2). This endowment of the fullness of the Holy Spirit is demonstrated in the five results mentioned in verses 3-4. Finally, the King and His reign are characterized by righteousness and faithfulness (v. 5).

So, the Lord Jesus will be both the King of Israel and the King of the World. Under His absolute authority and monarchy there will be two branches of government established, the Gentile branch and the Jewish branch.

B. The Gentile Branch of Government

1. The Church and the Tribulation Saints

The part that the Church is to have in the millennial reign of the Messiah is found in Revelation 20:4-6:

> *And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the word of God, and such as worshipped not the beast, neither his image, and received not the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they lived, and reigned with Christ a thousand years. The rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years should be finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that has part in the first resurrection: over these the second death has no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.*

In verse four, John describes the saints who are to co-reign with the Messiah. First, there are those to whom judgment has been given. This would be a reference to the Church saints who were raptured at some time preceding the Great Tribulation. The judgment spoken of is that of the Judgment Seat of the Messiah, the judgment of the believer's works. In fact, it is the outcome of this judgment that will determine the position of each Church saint in the Kingdom.[1] A second group of saints who are to co-

[1] For details see Chapter 6, The Eschatology of the Invisible Church.

reign with Him are those who *had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus*. These are the believers who will be martyred during the first half of the Great Tribulation and were mentioned under the fifth Seal (Rev. 6:9-11). A third group are those who did not worship the Antichrist or his image, nor received the mark of 666 on their forehead or on their right hand. Since these things were initiated only at the middle of the Tribulation, this third group of saints are those of the second half of the Great Tribulation. So then, both Church and Tribulation saints will co-reign with the King for one thousand years. The Old Testament saints will have a different destiny, to be discussed in the next chapter.

The facts of verse four mark the conclusion of the first resurrection. The first resurrection is the resurrection of all righteous ones and is separated from the second resurrection by one thousand years. Jesus was resurrected three days after His death, and thus He became the firstfruits of the first resurrection (I Cor. 15:23). The Church saints will be resurrected at the Rapture some time before the Tribulation (I Thes. 4:16). Finally, the Old Testament saints (Is. 26:19; Dan. 12:2) and the Tribulation saints (Rev. 20:4) will be resurrected in the seventy-five day interval between the Tribulation and the Millennium. It has already been shown that death during the Kingdom will be for unbelievers only. Therefore, since only unbelievers die during the Millennium, no resurrection of millennial saints will be necessary. As a result, the first resurrection will be totally complete with the resurrection of the Tribulation saints. One thousand years will pass before the second resurrection is brought to completion.

The Church and Tribulation saints will co-reign with the Messianic King over the Gentile nations. They will be the King's representative authority and will carry out His decrees to the nations.

2. Kings

As has been mentioned earlier, in Psalm 72, the different Gentile nations will have kings over them. This fact will be seen in some other passages in the next chapter. These kings will have their natural bodies, while the saints who will be over them will have their spiritual, resurrected, and glorified bodies. While the individual kings will be the supreme rulers over their own nations, they themselves will be under the authority of the Church and Tribulation saints.

So then, in the Gentile branch of government, the chain of command will be from Messiah to the Church and Tribulation saints to the kings of the Gentile nations.

C. The Jewish Branch of Government

1. David: The King and Prince

The absolute monarchy of the Messiah will extend to Israel as well as to the Gentile nations. But directly under the Messianic King, having authority over all Israel, will be the resurrected David, who is given both titles of king and prince. He will be a king because he will rule over Israel, but he will be a prince in that he will be under the authority of the Messiah. Just as all the Gentile nations will have kings, so will Israel. The difference is that the Gentile kings will all have their natural bodies, while David will have his resurrected body.

There are several passages that speak of David as being king over Israel and prince under King Messiah, such as Jeremiah 30:9:

> *But they shall serve Jehovah their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them.*

Not only will Israel in the future serve *Jehovah their God*, but they will also serve *David their king*.

Another passage is Ezekiel 34:23-24:

> *And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. And I, Jehovah, will be their God, and my servant David prince among them; I, Jehovah, have spoken it.*

When the restoration of Israel comes, it will no longer be in the form of two kingdoms with each one having their own king. They will be a reunited nation with only one head, and that head will be the resurrected David, who will serve as their prince. So while Jehovah will serve as their God and absolute King, David will serve under Him as God's prince over Israel.

Later, in Ezekiel 37:24-25, the prophet writes:

> *And my servant David shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my ordinances, and observe my statutes, and do them. And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers dwelled; and they shall dwell therein, they, and their children, and their children's children, for ever: and David my servant shall be their prince for ever.*

Ezekiel reiterates the fact that they will have David to function as the king of Israel. He is to be their prince and shepherd. Under his guidance, Israel will be able to keep the righteous commandments of God. The Land will be restored to them as well as David their king.

One final passage that points to this aspect of the government of the Millennium is Hosea 3:5:

> *Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek Jehovah their God, and David their king, and shall come with fear unto Jehovah and to his goodness in the latter days.*

Making the same points as Jeremiah and Ezekiel, Hosea states that in the future restoration, Israel will not only be subservient to Jehovah their God, but also to David their king.

While all these passages are often explained as actually referring to David's greater Son, nothing in the text indicates that *David* is to be taken symbolically. If the prophets wanted to refer to the Messiah in connection with David, they used terms such as "Root of Jesse," "Branch of David," "Son of David," or "Seed of David." None of these expressions are used here. The text simply states, *David*. In keeping with literal interpretation, it is best to take the text as it reads, meaning the literal David, who, in his resurrected form, will function as the king over Israel and as a prince in subjection to the King of the World. It is in this sense that David will serve both as king and prince. From the viewpoint of Israel, David will be their king ruling over them. But from the viewpoint of the Messiah, David will be a prince.

2. The Twelve Apostles Over the Twelve Tribes

On two occasions, Jesus promised the Twelve Apostles that in the Kingdom they will be in authority over the Twelve Tribes. The first of these passages is Matthew 19:28:

> *And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye who have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*

The time referred to is that of *the regeneration* or renovation of the earth, when Jesus will sit upon the reestablished Throne of David in His glory. It is then that twelve other thrones will be set up, one over each of the Twelve Tribes, and the Apostles will sit on these thrones and exercise rule.

The second passage is found in Luke 22:28-30:

> *But ye are they that have continued with me in my temptations; and I appoint unto you a kingdom, even as my Father appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom; and ye shall sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*

The Millennial Kingdom that the Father appointed for the Son was extended by Jesus to the Twelve Apostles. The difference is that Messiah's domain will be over all the world, David's rule over all Israel, while the Apostles' jurisdiction will be over particular tribes. The Twelve are promised two privileges with this appointment. The *first* is that they will be continually with Jesus and eating and drinking at His table throughout the Kingdom period. The *second* privilege is to have their own thrones from which they will rule over the Tribes of Israel.

Unfortunately, nothing is said as to which Apostle is to rule over which tribe. The answer to that question awaits the fulfillment in the future Kingdom.

3. Princes

In addition to the already-specified positions of government, there is the mention of other rulers simply entitled as *princes*. One such passage is found in Isaiah 32:1:

> *Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in justice.*

The king reigning in righteousness will be the Lord Jesus. Along with Him there is the mention of *princes* who will be in positions of authority and just in character.

A second passage is Ezekiel 45:8:

> *In the land it shall be to him for a possession in Israel: and my princes shall no more oppress my people; but they shall give the land to the house of Israel according to their tribes.*

The entire context of this passage (Ezek. 40-48) will be discussed in the next chapter. But for now, it should be noted that, once again, there is the mention of *princes* who are in positions of authority in the Millennium. Unlike princes in the past, these will not be characterized by oppression. Involved in their authority will be the partitioning of the Land of Israel into its twelve tribal divisions.

The resurrected Zerubbabel, mentioned in Haggai 2:20-23, will very likely be among these princes:

> *And the word of Jehovah came the second time unto Haggai in the four and twentieth day of the month, saying, Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, saying, I will shake the heavens and the earth; and I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms; and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the nations; and I will overthrow the chariots, and those that ride in them; and the horses and their riders shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother. In that day, says Jehovah of hosts, will I take you, O Zerubbabel, my servant, the son of Shealtiel, says Jehovah, and will make you as a signet; for I have chosen you, says Jehovah of hosts.*

The time of Zerubbabel's exalted position will be after the shaking of the heavens and the earth (vv. 20-21) and the destruction of the invading armies (v. 22). Both of these will occur at the Second Coming. It is after these events that Zerubbabel is promised an exalted position (v. 23) which will make him as close to God as a signet ring is to a king. Zerubbabel has been chosen for an exalted position in the Kingdom and will apparently be among the princes mentioned by the other two prophets. Zerubbabel is also of the House of David.

4. Judges and Counselors

Another group of rulers in the Kingdom will be the judges and counselors mentioned in Isaiah 1:26:

> *And I will restore your judges as at the first, and your counsellors as at the beginning: afterward you shall be called The city of righteousness, a faithful town.*

This position of authority will be particularly related to the City of Jerusalem. These rulers will be responsible for the dispensing of justice in a judicial sense, and there will be no perversion of this justice.

5. Israel Over the Gentiles

The final link in this chain of command in the Jewish branch of government is that Israel is to become the head over the Gentiles. More will be said on this in the next chapter, but mention of it must be made here.

The fact that Israel is to become the head of the Gentiles was part of God's promises to Israel in the Book of Deuteronomy. One such passage is Deuteronomy 15:6:

> *For Jehovah your God will bless you, as he promised you: and you shall lend unto many nations, but you shall not borrow; and you shall rule over many nations, but they shall not rule over you.*

The leadership over the Gentiles is to be part of Israel's reward for obedience in Deuteronomy 28:1:

> *And it shall come to pass, if you shall hearken diligently unto the voice of Jehovah your God, to observe to do all his commandments which I command you this day, that Jehovah your God will set you on high above all the nations of the earth.*

Such obedience and headship awaits Israel's national regeneration. This promise is reiterated in Deuteronomy 28:13:

> *And Jehovah will make you the head, and not the tail; and you shall be above only, and you shall not be beneath; if you shall hearken unto the commandments of Jehovah your God, which I command you this day, to observe and to do them.*

Besides the statements found in the Law of Moses, the Prophets also described Israel's future headship over the Gentiles. One such passage is Isaiah 14:1-2:

> *For Jehovah will have compassion on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and the sojourner shall join himself with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob. And the peoples shall take them, and bring them to their place; and the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of Jehovah for servants and for handmaids: and they shall take them captive whose captives they were; and they shall rule over their oppressors.*

The Gentiles will not only conduct the Jews back to the Land of Israel, but they will be possessed by Israel. They will become servants to Israel. Similar passages are found in Isaiah 49:22-23 and 61:6-7.

The chain of command in the Jewish branch of government is from the Messianic King to David, to the Twelve Apostles, to the princes, to the judges and counselors, over all Israel, which will be serving as the head of the Gentiles.

The rod of iron that will characterize the rule of the government in the Kingdom will be implemented through various spheres and positions of authority.

NINETEEN

Israel in the Messianic Kingdom

Israel within the period of the Messianic Kingdom is a major theme of the Old Testament Prophets. Indeed, it was the high point of Old Testament prophecy and every writing prophet with the exception of Jonah, Nahum, Habakkuk, and Malachi had something to say about it. The latter two did make reference to the Second Coming and the Tribulation, which, in the wider context of the Prophets, implied a kingdom to follow. To spiritualize and allegorize away such a great amount of Scripture is to confuse the whole science of interpretation. There is no reason to spiritualize any of these prophecies any more than there is reason to do so to those prophecies dealing with the First Coming of the Messiah such as the virgin birth, the birth in Bethlehem, His death, or His physical resurrection, etc.

Because of the amount of revelation available on Israel in the Messianic Kingdom, this chapter will be divided into eight major divisions: *First*, the four facets of the final restoration of Israel; *second*, other characteristics of Israel's final restoration; *third*, the Millennial Mountain of Jehovah's House; *fourth*, the Millennial Temple; *fifth*, the millennial system of priesthood and sacrifice; *sixth*, the millennial river; *seventh*, the Millennial Israel; and *eighth*, the Millennial Jerusalem.

A. The Four Facets of the Final Restoration of Israel

There are four primary facets to Israel's final restoration, with each being based on a specific covenant. Each of these covenants are fully developed in later prophetic revelation. This section will survey each covenant as it relates to Israel's final restoration along with the prophetic development

of these covenants.

1. The Regeneration of Israel

a. The Basis: The New Covenant

The first facet of Israel's final restoration is the national regeneration of Israel. The timing of this regeneration has already been discussed in Chapter 14, The Campaign of Armageddon and the Second Coming of Jesus the Messiah. This section is concerned with the development of that motif. The basis of Israel's final regeneration is the New Covenant, in Jeremiah 31:31-34:

> *Behold, the days come, says Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they broke, although I was a husband unto them, says Jehovah. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says Jehovah: I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people: and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, says Jehovah: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more.*

The announcement of the New Covenant begins with a declaration that it will be a Jewish covenant, for it will be made with both houses of Israel (v. 31). It will be in sharp contradistinction with the older Mosaic Covenant (v. 32). Of the five Jewish covenants, the Mosaic was the only conditional one. Although God had been faithful in keeping His terms of the covenant, Israel had not been so faithful, resulting in the Mosaic Covenant's being broken. For while the Mosaic Covenant showed the standard of righteousness which the Law demanded, it could never impart to the Jew the power to keep

it. But that problem will be rectified in the New Covenant (v. 33) through regeneration, which will provide the internal power necessary to meet and to keep the righteous standards of God. The result of the New Covenant will be a total national regeneration of Israel (v. 34). Jewish missions and Jewish evangelism will not be needed in the Messianic Kingdom because every Jew will know the Lord, from the least to the greatest. The sins of Israel will be forgiven and forgotten. While there will be Gentile unbelievers in the Kingdom, there will not be Jewish unbelievers in the Kingdom. To a man, all the Jews will believe. There will be no need to tell a Jew to "know the Lord" because they will all know Him.

It is upon this New Covenant that the first facet of Israel's restoration, the regeneration of Israel, is based.

b. The Prophetic Development

That Israel was to undergo a national regeneration is not confined to the words of the New Covenant alone. Some passages were already discussed under the Campaign of Armageddon. But there are many others. Isaiah 29:22-24 states:

> *Therefore thus says Jehovah, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob: Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale. But when he sees his children, the work of my hands, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name; yea, they shall sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall stand in awe of the God of Israel. They also that err in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmur shall receive instruction.*

A promise is made to the patriarch Jacob. Although for most of Jewish history Jacob would have been ashamed of the waywardness of his descendants, when the national regeneration comes, he will have much to be proud of.

Another passage is Isaiah 30:18-22:

> *And therefore will Jehovah wait, that he may be gracious unto you; and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you: for Jehovah is a God of justice; blessed are all they that wait for him. For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem; you shall weep no more; he will surely*

> *be gracious unto you at the voice of your cry; when he shall hear, he will answer you. And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet shall not your teachers be hidden any more, but your eyes shall see your teachers; and your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it; when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left. And ye shall defile the overlaying of your graven images of silver, and the plating of your molten images of gold: you shall cast them away as an unclean thing; you shall say unto it, Get you hence.*

According to this particular passage, the regeneration will be a result of the judgments of the Great Tribulation, which will be God's discipline upon the nation of Israel in order to correct them. It will be by way of the judgments of the Tribulation that Israel will come to a saving knowledge of her Messiah.

Later, in Isaiah 44:1-5, the prophet wrote:

> *Yet now hear, O Jacob my servant; and Israel, whom I have chosen: thus says Jehovah that made you, and formed you from the womb, who will help you: Fear not, O Jacob my servant; and you, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen. For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and streams upon the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon your seed, and my blessing upon your offspring: and they shall spring up among the grass, as willows by the watercourses. One shall say, I am Jehovah's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto Jehovah, and surname himself by the name of Israel.*

It was God Who chose Israel from the very beginning (vv. 1-2), and Israel has yet to become the chosen vessel which she was ordained to be. God will pour out His Spirit upon the entire nation (v. 3) with the result that Israel will begin to bear fruit (v. 4) and will remain ever loyal to her God (v. 5). Later in this chapter, in verses 21-23, Isaiah emphasized the removal of Israel's sins:

> *Remember these things, O Jacob, and Israel; for you are my servant: I have formed you; you are my servant: O Israel, you shall not be forgotten of me. I have blotted out, as a thick*

> *cloud, your transgressions, and, as a cloud, your sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed you. Sing, O ye heavens, for Jehovah has done it; shout, ye lower parts of the earth; break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for Jehovah has redeemed Jacob, and will glorify himself in Israel.*

Israel's everlasting salvation and freedom from shame is emphasized in Isaiah 45:17:

> *But Israel shall be saved by Jehovah with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be put to shame nor confounded world without end.*

The two other Major Prophets also spoke of this final regeneration. Jeremiah 24:7 records:

> *And I will give them a heart to know me, that I am Jehovah: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God; for they shall return unto me with their whole heart.*

When God regenerates Israel, He will give them a heart to know the Lord. With this regenerated heart, they will be able to return to God with an undivided heart. At the time of Israel's regeneration, her sins will no longer be found, according to Jeremiah 50:19-20:

> *And I will bring Israel again to his pasture, and he shall feed on Carmel and Bashan, and his soul shall be satisfied upon the hills of Ephraim and in Gilead. In those days, and in that time, says Jehovah, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I leave as a remnant.*

Ezekiel also emphasized that future regeneration of Israel, and in Ezekiel 11:19-20 he wrote:

> *And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them a heart of flesh; that they may walk in my statutes, and keep my ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.*

At the time of Israel's regeneration, they will be given a new heart and a new spirit as their human spirit will be reborn (v. 19). The result of this work of God on the heart and spirit of man will be an enablement to walk in and to keep the righteous standards of God.

Later, Ezekiel 36:25-27 states:

> *And I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my ordinances, and do them.*

Repeating aspects stated earlier and then adding some more information of his own, Ezekiel further describes the coming regeneration. All of Israel's sins will be cleansed (v. 25). A regenerate heart and spirit will be given so that Israel can walk in newness of life (v. 26). Furthermore, the Holy Spirit will indwell the Jews so that they will be empowered to walk in the commandments of the Lord (v. 27).

The regeneration of Israel is also a prominent theme in the Minor Prophets. Hosea, who spoke a great deal about God's punishment for Israel's sins, did not fail to speak of Israel's regeneration. One such passage is Hosea 1:10-2:1:

> *Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass that, in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God. And the children of Judah and the children of Israel shall be gathered together, and they shall appoint themselves one head, and shall go up from the land; for great shall be the day of Jezreel. Say ye unto your brethren, Ammi; and to your sisters, Ruhamah.*

Though judgments will decimate the ranks of Israel, nevertheless, the time will come when Israel will increase tremendously in population (v. 10a). Even though for a long period of time they were *Lo Ammi* (not my people), they will once again become *Ammi* (my people), the people

of God (v. 10b). When the reunification comes, they will be God's people who have obtained God's mercy (1:11-2:1).

Hosea not only begins his book with Israel's regeneration, but he also ends with it in Hosea 14:4-8:

> *I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely; for my anger is turned away from him. I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall blossom as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive-tree, and his smell as Lebanon. They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the grain, and blossom as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon. Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I have answered, and will regard him: I am like a green fir-tree; from me is your fruit found.*

Israel's backslidings will all be thoroughly healed (v. 4), for only then will Israel receive the manifold blessings of God (vv. 5-7). All worship of other gods will cease when the regeneration comes (v. 8).

That this regeneration of Israel will be a result of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is the point of Joel 2:28-32:

> *And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit. And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of Jehovah comes. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of Jehovah shall be delivered; for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those that escape, as Jehovah has said, and among the remnant those whom Jehovah does call.*

Once the Holy Spirit is poured out on all Israel, then they will call upon the Name of the Lord. God will respond to that call by delivering and saving them.

The national regeneration of Israel will result in the total forgiveness

of Israel's sins, according to Micah 7:18-20:

> *Who is a God like unto you, that pardons iniquity, and passes over the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retains not his anger for ever, because he delights in lovingkindness. He will again have compassion upon us; he will tread our iniquities under foot; and you will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. You will perform the truth to Jacob, and the lovingkindness to Abraham, which you have sworn unto our fathers from the days of old.*

God's loyal love for Israel will cause Him to pardon and to pass over the sins of Israel when He will return to them in all compassion (vv. 18-19). He will do so on the basis of the Abrahamic Covenant (v. 20), especially as it is developed in the salvation aspect of the New Covenant.

Another prophecy that spoke of Israel's regeneration is Zephaniah 3:9-13:

> *For then will I turn to the peoples a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of Jehovah, to serve him with one consent. From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia my suppliants, even the daughter of my dispersed, shall bring my offering. In that day shall you not be put to shame for all your doings, wherein you have transgressed against me; for then I will take away out of the midst of you your proudly exulting ones, and you shall no more be haughty in my holy mountain. But I will leave in the midst of you an afflicted and poor people, and they shall take refuge in the name of Jehovah. The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth; for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid.*

Throughout the dispersion, the Jews will begin to call upon the Name of the Lord. It is important to note that regardless of where the Jews are, they will respond, so that the regeneration will indeed be total.

One final passage is Romans 11:25-27:

> *For I would not, brethren, have you ignorant of this mystery, lest ye be wise in your own conceits, that a hardening in part*

> *has befallen Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in; and so all Israel shall be saved: even as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer; He shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: And this is my covenant unto them, When I shall take away their sins.*

As Paul brings to a conclusion his lengthy treatment of the place of Israel in the program of God, he points out that the present blindness and hardening of Israel is not a permanent one. It is temporary, until the full number of Gentiles preordained for the Body of the Messiah is reached (v. 25). It is then that the hardening of Israel will be removed, and all Israel living at that time will be saved (vv. 26-27).

2. The Regathering of Israel

a. The Basis: The Land Covenant

The second facet of the final restoration of Israel is the regathering of Israel from all over the world. This is based on the Land Covenant of Deuteronomy 29:1-30:20. Traditionally, this covenant has been known as the Palestinian Covenant, for it largely concerns the Land that for centuries was called *Palestine*. It was an appropriate term at the time it was coined, and even Jews called the Land "Palestine." This is now an unfortunate term for two reasons. *First*: it was a name given to the Land by the Roman Emperor Hadrian after the second Jewish revolt under Bar Cochba (A.D. 132-135) for the purpose of erasing any Jewish remembrance of the Land as part of his policy to "de-judaize" the Land. *Second*: due to the historical events in the Middle East in the twentieth century, the name is associated more with Arabs than with Jews. For these reasons (and others), the author prefers to call it "the Land Covenant." However, it should be noted that in other writings it is still called the Palestinian Covenant.

The passage begins with a clear statement that the Land Covenant is distinct and different from the Mosaic Covenant (29:1). The former is eternal and unconditional, while the latter is both temporal and conditional. Moses then records in summary form the forty years of wilderness experience leading up to the point of being about to enter into the Promised Land (29:2-9). But before entrance into the Land can occur,

another covenant needs to be made in order to warn them of things to come (29:10-13). They are warned against turning away from the Lord (29:14-21). Then the passage proceeds to state that they will do exactly that, resulting in the dispersion out of the Land into the Gentile nations to endure a long period of many persecutions (29:22-29). But this dispersion out of the Land is not going to be permanent, because eventually there will be a regathering, as described in Deuteronomy 30:1-10:

> *And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon you, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before you, and you shall call them to mind among all the nations, whither Jehovah your God has driven you, and shall return unto Jehovah your God, and shall obey his voice according to all that I command you this day, you and your children, with all your heart, and with all your soul; that then Jehovah your God will turn your captivity, and have compassion upon you, and will return and gather you from all the peoples, whither Jehovah your God has scattered you. If any of your outcasts be in the uttermost parts of heaven, from thence will Jehovah your God gather you, and from thence will he fetch you: and Jehovah your God will bring you into the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it; and he will do you good, and multiply you above your fathers. And Jehovah your God will circumcise your heart, and the heart of your seed, to love Jehovah your God will all your heart, and with all your soul, that you may live. And Jehovah your God will put all these curses upon your enemies, and on them that hate you, that persecuted you. And you shall return and obey the voice of Jehovah, and do all his commandments which I command you this day. And Jehovah your God will make you plenteous in all the work of your hand, in the fruit of your body, and in the fruit of your cattle, and in the fruit of your ground, for good: for Jehovah will again rejoice over you for good, as he rejoiced over your fathers; if you shall obey the voice of Jehovah your God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which are written in this book of the law; if you turn unto Jehovah your God with all your heart, and with all your soul.*

After the long period of persecution described in chapter 29, there will ultimately be the regeneration of Israel as the people return to the Lord (vv. 1-2). Following the regeneration of Israel, there will be the regathering from all over the world (v. 3), so that even if Jews should be found in the uttermost parts of the heavens, they will nevertheless be returned (v. 4) and brought back into the Promised Land (v. 5). But this regathering will occur only after the regeneration of Israel (v. 6), at which time the punishments previously applied to Israel will now be applied to the Gentiles (v. 7). Although curses may fall on the Gentiles, there will only be blessings for Israel (vv. 8-9) because they will totally return to the Lord (v. 10). The Land Covenant ends with some further admonitions, warnings and promises (30:11-20).

b. The Prophetic Development

The regathering of Israel, following the regeneration, is another high point of prophetic revelation to be found in many of the Prophets. In Isaiah 11:11-12:6, the final regathering is described as the second of two worldwide regatherings of Israel:

> *And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord will set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, that shall remain, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And he will set up an ensign for the nations, and will assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth. The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and they that vex Judah shall be cut off: Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim. And they shall fly down upon the shoulder of the Philistines on the west; together shall they despoil the children of the east: they shall put forth their hand upon Edom and Moab; and the children of Ammon shall obey them. And Jehovah will utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his scorching wind will he wave his hand over the River, and will smite it into seven streams, and cause men to march over dryshod. And there shall be a highway for the remnant of his people, that shall remain, from Assyria; like as there was for Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt. And*

> *in that day you shall say, I will give thanks unto you, O Jehovah; for though you were angry with me, your anger is turned away, and you comfort me. Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid: for Jehovah, even Jehovah, is my strength and song; and he is become my salvation. Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation. And in that day shall ye say, Give thanks unto Jehovah, call upon his name, declare his doings among the peoples, make mention that his name is exalted. Sing unto Jehovah; for he has done excellent things: let this be known in all the earth. Cry aloud and shout, you inhabitant of Zion; for great in the midst of you is the Holy One of Israel.*

Although many commentators identify the first regathering as the return from the Babylonian Captivity, that could hardly be described as a worldwide regathering. The first regathering is the one in unbelief prior to the Great Tribulation, and this has been happening since 1948. The first regathering is in unbelief in preparation for judgment. The regathering described in this passage is the second one (v. 11a), in faith in preparation for the millennial blessings. This regathering is not merely local, from the nations of the Middle East (v. 11b), but from all over the world (v. 12). Isaiah then goes on to develop certain characteristics of Israel's final regathering. *First*: the unity between Israel and Judah will be restored (vv. 13-14). Ephraim's envy of Judah will cease (v. 13), an envy that developed over the placing of the House of God in Judah (Ps. 78:9-11, 67-68). This unity will enable them to overcome their opponents (v. 14). *Second*: the final regathering will be accompanied by miracles (vv. 15-16). *The tongue of the Egyptian Sea*, the Gulf of Suez, will dry up, while the Euphrates will be smitten and split up into seven smaller streams so as to make it easy to cross. As a highway was made for Israel at the Exodus, there will likewise be one again in the final regathering. Immediately after the Exodus, Israel sang the song found in Exodus 15:1-18. In the same way, after the final regathering, Israel will sing the song found in Isaiah 12:1-6. The song is in two stanzas. In the first stanza (vv. 1-3) Israel gives a thanksgiving to God for turning away anger (v. 1). They now realize that salvation is in Jehovah (v. 2) Who has poured out the waters of salvation freely (v. 3). In the second stanza (vv. 4-6) they wish to make known God's

deeds to all the world, so they give thanks (v. 4), sing (v. 5) and shout out loud of God's goodness (v. 6).

Later, in Isaiah 27:12-13, the prophet wrote:

> *And it shall come to pass in that day, that Jehovah will beat off his fruit from the flood of the River unto the brook of Egypt; and ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel. And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great trumpet shall be blown; and they shall come that were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and they that were outcasts in the land of Egypt; and they shall worship Jehovah in the holy mountain at Jerusalem.*

The emphasis in this passage is on the *totality* of the regathering, for every Jew one by one will be brought back into the Land of Israel. As in the previous Isaiah passage, the key locality of the regathering will be from the Middle East nations since, as a result of the fall of Israel in the middle of the Tribulation, the majority of the Jews will be located in this vicinity and it is here that they will have suffered the most. And so the Jews will be taken one by one out of Egypt and Assyria (modern Iraq). Jews are still to be found in various Arab countries suffering tremendous persecutions. But in the regathering they will be rescued from the land of their enemies. The regathering will be from all over the world, but with special emphasis on the Middle East nations.

The magnitude of the final regathering of Israel is described in Isaiah 43:5-7:

> *Fear not; for I am with you: I will bring your seed from the east, and gather you from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the end of the earth; every one that is called by my name, and whom I have created for my glory, whom I have formed, yea, whom I have made.*

As far as locality is concerned, the regathering will be worldwide, and to emphasize the fact, all four points of the compass are mentioned (vv. 5-6). Then the magnitude is illustrated by the usage of three words: *created*, *formed* and *made* (v. 7). These three words were used interchangeably in the creation account of Genesis 1-2. Hence, from God's perspective, the final regathering will be on the magnitude of the original creation.

The comparative magnitude of the final regathering with previous works of God is something Jeremiah also pointed out. In Jeremiah 16:14-15, it is compared with the Exodus:

> *Therefore, behold, the days come, says Jehovah, that it shall no more be said, As Jehovah lives, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, As Jehovah lives, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the countries whither he had driven them. And I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers.*

Throughout Jewish history, the Exodus has been considered the high point of Jewish history, but after the final regathering this will change (v. 14). In the future it will be the final regathering of the Jews that will become the high point of Jewish history (v. 15).

Later, in Jeremiah 23:3-4, the prophet stated:

> *And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and multiply. And I will set up shepherds over them, who shall feed them; and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall any be lacking, says Jehovah.*

From all over the world the Jews are to be regathered into the Land, where they will produce much fruit (v. 3). Furthermore, God will provide righteous leaders who will feed the people with righteousness, justice, and understanding (v. 4). Then there is another comparison with the Exodus in Jeremiah 23:7-8:

> *Therefore, behold, the days come, says Jehovah, that they shall no more say, As Jehovah lives, who brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, As Jehovah lives, who brought up and who led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all the countries whither I had driven them. And they shall dwell in their own land.*

One other passage in Jeremiah that speaks of the regathering is found

in 31:7-10:

> *For thus says Jehovah, Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout for the chief of the nations: publish ye, praise ye, and say, O Jehovah, save your people, the remnant of Israel. Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the uttermost parts of the earth, and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travails with child together: a great company shall they return hither. They shall come with weeping; and with supplications will I lead them: I will cause them to walk by rivers of waters, in a straight way wherein they shall not stumble; for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn. Hear the word of Jehovah, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off; and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd does his flock.*

Following the regeneration of Israel (v. 7) all the Jews will be regathered, regardless of their state of health and regardless of their location (v. 8). There will be no hindrances whatsoever to the regathering (v. 9), for the same One Who was able to scatter them will also be able to regather them (v. 10).

Ezekiel picked up the same motif in Ezekiel 11:14-18:

> *And the word of Jehovah came unto me, saying, Son of man, your brethren, even your brethren, the men of your kindred, and all the house of Israel, all of them, are they unto whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem have said, Get you far from Jehovah; unto us is this land given for a possession. Therefore say, Thus says the Lord Jehovah: Whereas I have removed them far off among the nations, and whereas I have scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them a sanctuary for a little while in the countries where they are come. Therefore say, Thus says the Lord Jehovah: I will gather you from the peoples, and assemble you out of the countries where ye have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel. And they shall come thither, and they shall take away all the detestable things thereof and all the abominations thereof from thence.*

The same God Who scattered Israel (v. 14-16) has every intention of re-

gathering them back into their own Land (v. 17) so that regenerate Israel can cleanse the Land of all pollution (v. 18).

Later, the prophet restated this doctrine in Ezekiel 36:24:

> *For I will take you from among the nations, and gather you out of all the countries, and will bring you into your own land.*

The Minor Prophets were not remiss in speaking of the regathering. One such prophecy is in Amos 9:14-15:

> *And I will bring back the captivity of my people Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be plucked up out of their land which I have given them, says Jehovah your God.*

The emphasis of Amos is on *permanency*. Israel is to be regathered in order to rebuild the Land (v. 14). In the final regathering, God will plant them in the Land so that they will never again be uprooted and dispersed out of the Land (v. 15).

The Prophet Zephaniah, whose whole theme was one of judgment, closed his book with a promise of the final regathering in Zephaniah 3:18-20:

> *I will gather them that sorrow for the solemn assembly, who were of you; to whom the burden upon her was a reproach. Behold, at that time I will deal with all them that afflict you; and I will save that which is lame, and gather that which was driven away; and I will make them a praise and a name, whose shame has been in all the earth. At that time will I bring you in, and at that time will I gather you; for I will make you a name and a praise among all the peoples of the earth, when I bring back your captivity before your eyes, says Jehovah.*

The judgment meted out against Israel is the result of her sins (vv. 18-19). These judgments will not have a destructive effect, but a corrective one. Once correction takes place, the regathering will indeed occur, and the final regathering will cause Israel to be a name and a praise among the

Gentile nations (v. 20).

The final prophet of the Old Testament to speak of the regathering is Zechariah, in 10:8-12:

> *I will hiss for them, and gather them; for I have redeemed them; and they shall increase as they have increased. And I will sow them among the peoples; and they shall remember me in far countries; and they shall live with their children, and shall return. I will bring them again also out of the land of Egypt, and gather them out of Assyria; and I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon; and place shall not be found for them. And he will pass through the sea of affliction, and will smite the waves in the sea, and all the depths of the Nile shall dry up; and the pride of Assyria shall be brought down, and the sceptre of Egypt shall depart. And I will strengthen them in Jehovah; and they shall walk up and down in his name, says Jehovah.*

As Zechariah portrayed the final regathering, he saw it in terms of *hissing*, which is the call of a shepherd for his sheep (v. 8a). The regathering will be a result of the redemption and regeneration of Israel (vv. 8b-9). While the regathering is to occur from around the world, there will be a special emphasis upon the Middle East nations (vv. 10-11). Once all the Jews are regathered, they will never again depart from the Lord (v. 12).

In the New Testament, the final regathering revealed by the Old Testament prophets is summarized in Matthew 24:31:

> *And he shall send forth his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.*

In this passage, with the background of Isaiah 27:12-13, Jesus stated that the angels will be involved in the final regathering and they will bring the Jews back into the Land. As to locality, the emphasis is on the worldwide regathering. The Matthew passage is a rather simple summary of all that the prophets had to say about the second facet of Israel's final restoration. Its purpose was to make clear that the worldwide regathering predicted by the prophets will be fulfilled only after the Second Coming. The parallel passage in Mark 13:27 adds a detail:

> *And then shall he send forth the angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.*

With the additional background of Deuteronomy 30:3-4, Jesus added that the regathering will be from the uttermost part of the earth (living Israel) and the uttermost part of Heaven (resurrected Israel).

3. The Possession of the Land

a. The Basis: The Abrahamic Covenant

The third facet of the final restoration of Israel is the possession of the Land, encompassing two aspects: its total boundaries and its productivity. The basis for this facet is the Abrahamic Covenant, as found in various passages of the Book of Genesis. There are too many to cite them all. Therefore, only those passages that deal with the Land aspect will be cited. The very beginning of the Abrahamic Covenant is in Genesis 12:1-3:

> *Now Jehovah said unto Abram, Get you out of your country, and from your kindred, and from your father's house, unto the land that I will show you: and I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great; and be you a blessing: and I will bless them that bless you, and him that curses you will I curse: and in you shall all the families of the earth be blessed.*

At the time that the covenant was initially made, Abram was simply told to leave for a land that God would show him. At this point, Abram is promised only to be shown a land and nothing more. When he arrived in the Land, God again revealed Himself to Abram in Genesis 12:7:

> *And Jehovah appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto your seed will I give this land: and there built he an altar unto Jehovah, who appeared unto him.*

In this verse, the promise is stated in such a way that it is Abram's seed that is to possess the Land. So from this passage alone, it might be concluded

that Abram himself was never to possess the Land.

But that is not the case, as another passage on the Abrahamic Covenant makes clear, in Genesis 13:14-17:

> *And Jehovah said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now your eyes, and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward: for all the land which you see, to you will I give it, and to your seed for ever. And I will make your seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then may your seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for unto you will I give it.*

Although for the time being the area of grazing was divided between Abram and Lot, ultimately all the land that Abram could see is to be possessed by him (vv. 14-15). The promise is clearly made that the Land is to be possessed by Abram personally as well as by Abram's seed. Yet Abram died having never possessed any part of the Land, except for a few wells and a burial cave which he had to purchase with good money. In order for God to fulfill His promise to Abram, two things have to occur. Abram must be resurrected, and the Land must be restored to Israel. Since Abram's seed is to possess the Land as well, the population of Israel will greatly increase at that time (v. 16). Abram was then directed to walk throughout the Land in order to get to know it very well, for some day he will possess it (v. 17).

In the above passage, Abram was told that all the land he could possibly see would be possessed by him, but no exact boundaries were given. Later, however, as God signed the covenant, the exact boundaries were given, in Genesis 15:12-21:

> *And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, a horror of great darkness fell upon him. And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that your seed shall be sojourners in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. But you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried in a good old age. And in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet full. And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down,*

> *and it was dark, behold, a smoking furnace, and a flaming torch that passed between these pieces. In that day Jehovah made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto your seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates: the Kenite, and the Kenizzite, and the Kadmonite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Rephaim, and the Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Girgashite, and the Jebusite.*

At the time of the signing and the sealing of the Abrahamic Covenant, God spelled out the future history of Abram's seed prior to their initial possession of the Land (vv. 12-16). Then God signed and sealed the covenant (v. 17) and declared what the boundaries of the Land will be (vv. 18-21). The borders are to extend from the Euphrates River in the north to the River of Egypt in the south. There is no problem with the identity of the Euphrates in the north, but there has been some confusion over the identity of the River of Egypt. Some have identified the River of Egypt as being the same as the Brook of Egypt mentioned in other passages. Both have at times been identified with the Nile River, making it the southern border. But none of these suppositions are correct. First of all, the Brook of Egypt and the River of Egypt are not the same. The latter refers to a continuous flowing river, while the former is a *wadi*, a dry river bed that only has water in it periodically during the rainy season. The words for *river* and *brook* are two different Hebrew words, also forcing one to keep the two distinct. The *Brook of Egypt* is the modern *Wadi-el-Arish* running south to north in the central Sinai Peninsula. Just as the *River of Egypt* is not the same as the Brook of Egypt, neither is it the Nile River. If that were the case, the Jews would have already been in the Promised Land before they ever left Egypt. Rather, it refers to one of the "fingers" of the Nile River. As the river flows from the south to the north before reaching the Mediterranean Sea, it enters an area known as the Nile Delta, where it breaks up into a number of fingers or branches. The most eastern branch or finger was the one known as the River of Egypt. Today, the River of Egypt is along the line of the modern Suez Canal. Hence, according to this passage, Israel's southern boundary is to extend down to about where the Suez Canal is today. This raises some questions concerning consistency with other passages. In this passage, the southern boundary is given

as the *River of Egypt*, while the passages in the Prophets, when dealing with the Jewish settlement of the Land in the final restoration, give the southern boundary as the *Brook of Egypt*. This is not really a contradiction. The difference is simply between the extent of possession and control as over against the extent of actual settlement. In the final restoration of the Land, Israel will possess all the way south to the River of Egypt and will control down to the area of the modern Suez Canal. But as far as where the Jews will be living, the actual boundary of this settlement will only extend as far south as the Brook of Egypt or the modern Wadi-el-Arish.

After Abraham, the covenant is reconfirmed through Isaac in Genesis 26:2-5:

> *And Jehovah appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell you of: sojourn in this land, and I will be with you, and will bless you; for unto you, and unto your seed, I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I swore unto Abraham your father; and I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and will give unto your seed all these lands; and in your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.*

Isaac is commanded to stay in the Land and not to leave it (v. 2), for it is to Isaac and to Isaac's seed that the Land will be given (v. 3). It should be noted that the promise is not merely to Isaac's descendants, but to Isaac himself, requiring Isaac's future resurrection and possession of the Land. As for Isaac's seed, it will be greatly increased in population (v. 4). It is to Isaac and not Ishmael, or to the six sons of Keturah, that the Abrahamic Covenant is reconfirmed (v. 5).

After Isaac, the Abrahamic Covenant is reconfirmed to Jacob in Genesis 28:13-15:

> *And, behold, Jehovah stood above it, and said, I am Jehovah, the God of Abraham your father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon you lie, to you will I give it, and to your seed; and your seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west, and to the*

> *east, and to the north, and to the south: and in you and in your seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with you, and will keep you whithersoever you go, and will bring you again into this land; for I will not leave you, until I have done that which I have spoken to you of.*

It is to Jacob and not to Esau that the covenant is now reconfirmed (v. 13a). The promise is made that the Land will be given to both Jacob and to Jacob's seed (v. 13b). So again the possession of the Land is not a promise to the seed only, but to the individual Jacob as well. For this reason Jacob must also be resurrected and possess the Land. As previously, the seed will be greatly multiplied at that time (v. 14). As for Jacob himself, who was now departing from the Land, God will bring him back in his own lifetime (v. 15).

So then, it is on the Abrahamic Covenant, which is reconfirmed through Isaac and Jacob and then to all of Jacob's descendants (Gen. 49), that the third facet of Israel's final restoration is based.

b. The Prophetic Development

This third facet of Israel's final restoration, the possession of the Land, was further developed in both the Law and the Prophets. As far as the Law is concerned, it is found in Leviticus 26:40-45:

> *And they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their father, in their trespass which they trespassed against me, and also that, because they walked contrary unto me, I also walked contrary unto them, and brought them into the land of their enemies: if then their uncircumcised heart be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity; then will I remember my covenant with Jacob; and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land. The land also shall be left by them, and shall enjoy its sabbaths, while it lies desolate without them: and they shall accept of the punishment of their iniquity; because, even because they rejected my ordinances, and their soul abhorred my statutes. And yet*

> *for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not reject them, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them; for I am Jehovah their God; but I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the nations, that I might be their God: I am Jehovah.*

Following the regeneration of Israel (vv. 40-41) God will fully carry out the promises of the Abrahamic Covenant concerning the Land (v. 42). On the basis of the Abrahamic Covenant He will restore to them the Land that has lain desolate for so long (vv. 43-45).

In another part of the Law, the possession of the Land is also part of the Land Covenant, in Deuteronomy 30:5:

> *And Jehovah your God will bring you into the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it; and he will do you good, and multiply you above your fathers.*

The prophets of Israel developed this facet even further in both the Major and Minor Prophets. Among the Major Prophets, Isaiah 27:12 states:

> *And it shall come to pass in that day, that Jehovah will beat off his fruit from the flood of the River unto the brook of Egypt; and ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel.*

In this passage, the first aspect (the borders of the Land) is brought out. The northern (Euphrates River) and southern (the Brook of Egypt) boundaries are possessed for the first time in all of Israel's history. Israel will be able to settle in all of the Promised Land.

In another passage, Isaiah 30:23-26, the second aspect (increased productivity of the Land) of the third facet is stressed:

> *And he will give the rain for your seed, wherewith you shall sow the ground; and bread of the increase of the ground, and it shall be fat and plenteous: in that day shall your cattle feed in large pastures. The oxen likewise and the young asses that till the ground shall eat savory provender, which has been winnowed with the shovel and with the fork. And there shall be upon every lofty mountain, and upon every*

> *high hill, brooks and streams of waters, in the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall. Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that Jehovah binds up the hurt of his people, and heals the stroke of their wound.*

The Land will be well watered and will produce abundant food both for men and animals (vv. 23-25). Furthermore, there will be a tremendous increase of light, with the moon shining as brightly as the sun, while the light of the sun will be increased seven times what it is today. It will be a time of total healing of all physical infirmities (v. 26).

As for the deserts of Israel, Isaiah 35:1-2 states:

> *The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon: they shall see the glory of Jehovah, the excellency of our God.*

Isaiah later brought out the productivity aspect again in 65:21-24:

> *And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree shall be the days of my people, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for calamity; for they are the seed of the blessed of Jehovah, and their offspring with them. And it shall come to pass that, before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.*

With the possession of the Land of Israel, not only will the Jews be able to build houses and plant vineyards and crops (v. 21), but they will also enjoy the work of their hands, for no enemy will take it from them (vv. 22-23). They will enjoy it until a ripe old age.

Another Major Prophet, Jeremiah, also stressed the greater productivity of the Land in the final restoration. In Jeremiah 31:1-6 he wrote:

> *At that time, says Jehovah, will I be the God of all the families*

> *of Israel, and they shall be my people. Thus says Jehovah, The people that were left of the sword found favor in the wilderness; even Israel, when I went to cause him to rest. Jehovah appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved you with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn you. Again will I build you, and you shall be built, O virgin of Israel: again shall you be adorned with your tabrets, and shall go forth in the dances of them that make merry. Again shall you plant vineyards upon the mountains of Samaria; the planters shall plant, and shall enjoy the fruit thereof. For there shall be a day, that the watchmen upon the hills of Ephraim shall cry, Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion unto Jehovah our God.*

Because of God's everlasting love for His people (vv. 1-3), He intends to restore and build them again (v. 4). Once again for Israel there will be a time of plenty (v. 5), and the hills of Ephraim will echo with the call to come and worship God in Jerusalem (v. 6).

Later in the same passage, Jeremiah returned to the theme in 31:11-14:

> *For Jehovah has ransomed Jacob, and redeemed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he. And they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow unto the goodness of Jehovah, to the grain, and to the new wine, and to the oil, and to the young of the flock and of the herd: and their soul shall be as a watered garden; and they shall not sorrow any more at all. Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old together; for I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them, and make them rejoice from their sorrow. And I will satiate the soul of the priests with fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness, says Jehovah.*

After the redemption of Israel (v. 11), they will be restored to the Land, which will produce an abundance (v. 12), giving joy to all the inhabitants of the Land (vv. 13-14).

After Jeremiah, the next Major Prophet, Ezekiel, picked up the motif of the possession of the Land and stated in Ezekiel 20:42-44:

> *And ye shall know that I am Jehovah, when I shall bring you into the land of Israel, into the country which I swore*

> *to give unto your fathers. And there shall ye remember your ways, and all your doings, wherein ye have polluted yourselves; and ye shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for all your evils that ye have committed. And ye shall know that I am Jehovah, when I have dealt with you for my name's sake, not according to your evil ways, nor according to your corrupt doings, O ye house of Israel, says the Lord Jehovah.*

Israel is to be brought back into their land in accordance with the promises of God to the forefathers in the Abrahamic Covenant (v. 42). Israel will turn away from her sins of the past and will detest them (v. 43) and now serve God alone (v. 44).

Later, Ezekiel 28:25-26 adds:

> *Thus says the Lord Jehovah: When I shall have gathered the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they are scattered, and shall be sanctified in them in the sight of the nations, then shall they dwell in their own land which I gave to my servant Jacob. And they shall dwell securely therein; yea, they shall build houses, and plant vineyards, and shall dwell securely, when I have executed judgments upon all those that do them despite round about them; and they shall know that I am Jehovah their God.*

Following its regeneration and regathering, Israel will then possess the Land in accordance with the Abrahamic Covenant (v. 25). The security in which Israel will live and enjoy the works of her hands is then emphasized (v. 26).

The security aspect along with the element of increased productivity is the theme of Ezekiel 34:25-31:

> *And I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause evil beasts to cease out of the land; and they shall dwell securely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods. And I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in its season; there shall be showers of blessing. And the tree of the field shall yield its fruit, and the earth shall yield its increase, and they shall be secure in their land; and they shall know that I am Jehovah, when I have broken the bars of their yoke, and have delivered them out of the*

> *hand of those that made bondmen of them. And they shall no more be a prey to the nations, neither shall the beasts of the earth devour them; but they shall dwell securely, and none shall make them afraid. And I will raise up unto them a plantation for renown, and they shall be no more consumed with famine in the land, neither bear the shame of the nations any more. And they shall know that I, Jehovah, their God am with them, and that they, the house of Israel, are my people, says the Lord Jehovah. And ye my sheep, the sheep of my pasture, are men, and I am your God, says the Lord Jehovah.*

Since there will no longer be any wild beasts in the Land, Israel will be able to enjoy the Land in total security (v. 25). The rains will come in their proper time and in proper amounts (v. 26), increasing the productivity (v. 27a). Not only is Israel to be secure from the wild beasts, but also from all her enemies of the past (vv. 27b-28). None will come to destroy the crops (v. 29). In every way Israel will be rightly related to God and will be His peculiar possession (vv. 30-31).

Nor is this the end of the subject, as the prophet continued in Ezekiel 36:8-15:

> *But ye, O mountains of Israel, ye shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to my people Israel; for they are at hand to come. For, behold, I am for you, and I will turn unto you, and ye shall be tilled and sown; and I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, even all of it; and the cities shall be inhabited, and the waste places shall be builded; and I will multiply upon you man and beast; and they shall increase and be fruitful; and I will cause you to be inhabited after your former estate, and will do better unto you than at your beginnings: and ye shall know that I am Jehovah. Yea, I will cause men to walk upon you, even my people Israel; and they shall possess you, and you shall be their inheritance, and you shall no more henceforth bereave them of children. Thus says the Lord Jehovah: Because they say unto you, You land are a devourer of men, and have been a bereaver of your nation; therefore you shall devour men no more, neither bereave your nation any more, says the Lord Jehovah; neither will I let you hear any more the shame*

> *of the nations, neither shall you bear the reproach of the peoples any more, neither shall you cause your nation to stumble any more, says the Lord Jehovah.*

In spite of years of desolation, the Land is to be tilled again (vv. 8-9) and populated for the inhabitants of the Land will be greatly increased (vv. 10-11). Israel will again possess the Land (v. 12), and the production of the Land will be tremendous (vv. 13-15).

Later in this passage, the prophet further elaborated, in Ezekiel 36:28-38:

> *And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. And I will save you from all your uncleanness: and I will call for the grain, and will multiply it, and lay no famine upon you. And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye may receive no more the reproach of famine among the nations. Then shall ye remember your evil ways, and your doings that were not good; and ye shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations. Not for your sake do I this, says the Lord Jehovah, be it known unto you: be ashamed and confounded for your ways, O house of Israel. Thus says the Lord Jehovah: In the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will cause the cities to be inhabited, and the waste places shall be builded. And the land that was desolate shall be tilled, whereas it was a desolation in the sight of all that passed by. And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are fortified and inhabited. Then the nations that are left round about you shall know that I, Jehovah, have built the ruined places, and planted that which was desolate: I, Jehovah, have spoken it, and I will do it. Thus says the Lord Jehovah: For this, moreover, will I be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them: I will increase them with men like a flock. As the flock for sacrifice, as the flock of Jerusalem in her appointed feasts, so shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of men; and they shall know that I am Jehovah.*

Ezekiel declared that Israel will again possess the Land (v. 28) as a result

of her regeneration (v. 29). The reproach of Israel will be removed (v. 30), and Israel will detest her past sins (v. 31). It is not for Israel's glory (v. 32) that the regeneration (v. 33) and the tilling and rebuilding of the Land (vv. 34-35) will occur, but it is for God's own glory among the nations (v. 36). As for Israel, the population will increase and the desolate places will be rebuilt (vv. 37-38).

The repossession of the Land is also promised in the Minor Prophets, such as in Joel 2:18-27:

> *Then was Jehovah jealous for his land, and had pity on his people. And Jehovah answered and said unto his people, Behold, I will send you grain, and new wine, and oil, and ye shall be satisfied therewith; and I will no more make you a reproach among the nations; but I will remove far off from you the northern army, and will drive it into a land barren and desolate, its forepart into the eastern sea, and its hinder part into the western sea; and its stench shall come up, and its ill savor shall come up, because it has done great things. Fear not, O land, be glad and rejoice; for Jehovah has done great things. Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field; for the pastures of the wilderness do spring, for the tree bears its fruit, the fig-tree and the vine do yield their strength. Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in Jehovah your God; for he gives you the former rain in just measure, and he causes to come down for you the rain, the former rain and the latter rain, in the first month. And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with new wine and oil. And I will restore to you the years that the locust has eaten, the canker-worm, and the caterpillar, and the palmer-worm, my great army which I sent among you. And ye shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, and shall praise the name of Jehovah your God, that has dealt wondrously with you; and my people shall never be put to shame. And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am Jehovah your God, and there is none else; and my people shall never be put to shame.*

God will be jealous for His Land (v. 18), and this burning jealousy will bring about a great productivity in the Land (v. 19). The Land will be

secure from any further invasions (v. 20), and it will produce abundantly (vv. 21-22). The rains will come at the proper seasons and in proper amounts (v. 23), causing a tremendous amount of surplus in their storages (v. 24) and recuperation from all previous losses due to pestilences (v. 25). Israel will never again be shamed (v. 26), but will have a special relationship to God (v. 27).

Later, in Joel 3:18, the prophet declared that there will be an abundance of water in the Land:

> *And it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down sweet wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the brooks of Judah shall flow with waters; and a fountain shall come forth from the house of Jehovah, and shall water the valley of Shittim.*

The increased productivity of the Land is again pointed out in Amos 9:13:

> *Behold, the days come, says Jehovah, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that sows seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt.*

To summarize, for the first time in Israel's history, she will possess all of the Promised Land while the Land itself will greatly increase in its productivity and be well watered, all on the basis of the Abrahamic Covenant.

4. The Reestablishment of the Davidic Throne

a. The Basis: The Davidic Covenant

The fourth facet of the final restoration of Israel is the reestablishment of the Davidic Throne. This is based upon the Davidic Covenant, found in two passages of Scripture. The first is in II Samuel 7:11b-16:

> *Moreover Jehovah tells you that Jehovah will make you a house. When your days are fulfilled, and you shall sleep with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, that shall proceed out of your bowels, and I will establish his*

> *kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son: if he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men; but my lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before you. And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure for ever before you: your throne shall be established for ever.*

In this covenant, David is first of all promised that he will be the head of a dynasty (v. 11b). After David dies, the throne will go to one of his sons (Solomon) and the kingdom will be established in his hand (v. 12). It is Solomon who will build the Temple, and so God will establish his throne (not Solomon himself) for eternity (v. 13). Solomon will sin and God will have to punish him, but God's loyal love will not be removed from Solomon as it was from Saul (vv. 14-15). Nevertheless, the Davidic House or Dynasty, the Davidic Throne and the Davidic Kingdom will be eternal (v. 16).

The emphasis in this first account of the Davidic Covenant has been on Solomon. But a slightly different emphasis is given in the second passage, in I Chronicles 17:10b-14:

> *Moreover I tell you that Jehovah will build you a house. And it shall come to pass, when your days are fulfilled that you must go to be with your fathers, that I will set up your seed after you, who shall be of your sons; and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build me a house, and I will establish his throne for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son: and I will not take my lovingkindness away from him, as I took it from him that was before you; but I will settle him in my house and in my kingdom for ever; and his throne shall be established for ever.*

The emphasis in this passage is not on Solomon, but on the Messiah. David is promised a dynasty (v. 10b). Some time after his death, a descendant of one of his sons will be established in the kingdom (v. 11). The Samuel passage spoke of one of David's own sons, Solomon; but Chronicles speaks of a descendant of one of David's sons, namely, Jesus, Who was a descendant of Nathan, a son of David. This descendant

of David, the Messiah, will also build God a temple, the Millennial Temple, and His Throne will be established forever (v. 12). God's mercy will never be removed from this One (v. 13). Since the Samuel passage emphasized Solomon, there was the possibility of sin. But since the Chronicles passage emphasizes the Messiah, there is no possibility of sin, and hence, no mention of sin. Finally, it is this Person Himself Who is established forever, and not merely the Dynasty, Kingdom, and Throne (v. 14).

In essence, then, the Davidic Covenant promised four eternal things: an eternal Dynasty, an eternal Kingdom, an eternal Throne, and an eternal Person. The eternality of the Dynasty, Kingdom, and Throne is guaranteed only because the Seed of David culminated in the Person Who is Himself eternal.

The Messiah holds three offices: prophet, priest, and king. However, He does not function in all these offices simultaneously. Rather, the functioning of these three offices is to be carried out in a chronological sequence. During His ministry on earth at His First Coming, Jesus functioned in the office of a prophet. But this ceased at the time of His death. Since His death and resurrection, and until He returns, He is functioning in the office of a priest. This duty will cease at the Second Coming. Jesus has never yet functioned in the office of a king. For Him to do so, there must be the reestablishment of the Davidic Throne upon which He will sit to rule as King over Israel and King of the World. This duty will begin at the Second Coming.

b. The Prophetic Development

While this facet of Israel's final restoration has not been as fully developed as the others, it has not been totally ignored. Some of the prophetic developments, such as Jeremiah 23:5-6 and Isaiah 9:6-7, have already been discussed in Chapter 18, The Government of the Messianic Kingdom. But besides these, there are several other passages, such as Psalm 89:3-4:

> *I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant: Your seed will I establish for ever, And build up your throne to all generations.*

In this passage God states that He has made an eternal covenant with David (v. 3), including the establishment of an eternal dynasty and an

eternal throne (v. 4).

The eternality of the Dynasty and the Throne is restated later in the same Psalm, in verse 29:

> *His seed also will I make to endure for ever, And his throne as the days of heaven.*

Still later, verses 34-37 state:

> *My covenant will I not break, Nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness: I will not lie unto David: His seed shall endure for ever, And his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established for ever as the moon, And as the faithful witness in the sky.*

The continuation of the covenant is not dependent upon David or upon his descendants, but upon God's character (v. 34). Since God does not lie, the covenant is sure to stand (v. 35). For that very reason, the eternality of the Dynasty and the Throne is assured (vv. 36-37).

Another prophetic passage is Jeremiah 33:17-26:

> *For thus says Jehovah: David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel; neither shall the priests the Levites want a man before me to offer burnt-offerings, and to burn meal-offerings, and to do sacrifice continually. And the word of Jehovah came unto Jeremiah, saying, Thus says Jehovah: If ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, so that there shall not be day and night in their season; then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he shall not have a son to reign upon his throne; and with the Levites the priests, my ministers. As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured; so will I multiply the seed of David my servant, and the Levites that minister unto me. And the word of Jehovah came to Jeremiah, saying, Consider you not what this people have spoken, saying, The two families which Jehovah did choose, he has cast them off? thus do they despise my people, that they should be no more a nation before them. Thus says Jehovah: If my covenant of day and night stand not, if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth; then will also cast away the seed of Jacob, and of David my*

> *servant, so that I will not take of his seed to be rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: for I will cause their captivity to return, and will have mercy on them.*

The emphasis in this passage is clearly on the eternality of and the impossibility of breaking the Davidic Covenant. Under no circumstances will the House of David ever become extinct (vv. 17-18), for the Davidic Covenant is both unconditional and eternal (vv. 19-21). Ultimately the seed of David will be greatly multiplied (v. 22). The reestablishment of the Davidic Throne will be the antidote to the poisonous teaching that God no longer intends to fulfill His covenants with Israel (vv. 23-26). God is not through with Israel (vv. 23-24), but will fulfill every promise of the Davidic Covenant (vv. 25-26a) and the Abrahamic Covenant (v. 26b).

One other passage in the Old Testament is Amos 9:11-12:

> *In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up its ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old; that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and all the nations that are called by my name, says Jehovah that does this.*

When the Kingdom is established, the ruins of the House of David will be repaired, and the Davidic Throne will again exercise all the glory of the days gone by (v. 11). But in addition to all the glory of the past, the authority of the reestablished Davidic Throne will extend to all the Gentile nations (v. 12).

In the New Testament, the reestablishment of the Davidic Throne is found in Luke 1:32-33:

> *He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.*

All four key aspects of the Davidic Throne are mentioned here. The Son of Mary is to sit upon the eternal Throne over the eternal Kingdom, for He was born into the eternal Dynasty. The eternality of the Dynasty, Throne, and Kingdom is assured because they all culminate in the Person Who is Himself eternal: the Son of God.

The promises that God made to Israel have not been rendered null and void. Israel is yet to enjoy all the promises of the four unfulfilled

unconditional covenants, each of which points respectively to the four facets of Israel's final restoration.

B. Other Characteristics of Israel's Final Restoration

Besides the various features mentioned in the passages dealing with the covenants and their prophetic developments, other passages develop additional characteristics which may or may not necessarily be connected with any specific covenant. Some of these other characteristics that will be true at the time of Israel's final restoration will be dealt with in this section.

1. Reunited as a Nation

One of the other major features of the final restoration is that Israel will be reunited as a nation, never to be divided into two separate kingdoms again. This is mentioned by Jeremiah 3:18:

> *In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I gave for an inheritance unto your fathers.*

The key passage for this characteristic is found in the Vision of the Valley of Dry Bones of Ezekiel 37:1-23. Ezekiel is first commanded to prophesy over the dry bones scattered all over the valley (vv. 1-6). When he does, the bones all come together with sinews and skin, and then the breath of life is given to them so they become alive again (vv. 7-10). As God interprets the Vision of the Valley of Dry Bones (vv. 11-17), these bones are said to represent the whole House of Israel, which has become spiritually dead and dispersed (v. 11). Yet God will regather them, and they will again possess the Land (vv. 12-13). At the time of the regathering and possession of the Land, Israel will be regenerated by the Spirit of God so as to have a living and right relationship (v. 14). Then the prophet continues, in Ezekiel 37:15-23:

> *The word of Jehovah came again unto me, saying, And you, son of man, take you one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions: and join them for you one to another into one stick, that they may become one in your hand. And when the children of your people shall speak unto you, saying, Will you not show us what you mean by these? say unto them, Thus says the Lord Jehovah: Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his companions; and I will put them with it, even with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in my hand. And the sticks whereon you write shall be in your hand before their eyes. And say unto them, Thus says the Lord Jehovah: Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, whither they are gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: and I will make them one nation in the land, upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all; and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all; neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions; but I will save them out of all their dwelling-places, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them: so shall they be my people, and I will be their God.*

Ezekiel is commanded to take two sticks, and on one stick he is to write *Judah* and on the other *Joseph*, and then put the two sticks together so they become one stick in his hand (vv. 15-17). The interpretation of the miracle is that the two kingdoms will some day be reunited into one nation (vv. 18-20). When the regathering of Israel comes (v. 21), they will not be regathered into two nations, but into only one, for they will be under one King in one Kingdom (v. 22). At that time they will be thoroughly cleansed of their sins, which were the root cause of the original division (v. 23).

2. The Center of Gentile Attention

A second major characteristic of Israel's final restoration is that they will become the center of Gentile attention. A number of passages speak of this, such as Isaiah 14:1-2:

> *For Jehovah will have compassion on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and the sojourner shall join himself with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob. And the peoples shall take them, and bring them to their place; and the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of Jehovah for servants and for handmaids: and they shall take them captive whose captives they were; and they shall rule over their oppressors.*

After Israel's regeneration and restoration (v. 1a), Gentiles will align themselves with Israel in order to worship the God of Israel (v. 1b). In fact, as Israel is being regathered, not only will this be accomplished with the help of angels, but the Gentiles will be conducting the Jews back into the Land (v. 2a). Finally, the Gentiles will be possessed by Israel and will become the servants of Israel (v. 2b).

A similar statement is made in Isaiah 49:22-23:

> *Thus says the Lord Jehovah, Behold, I will lift up my hand to the nations, and set up my ensign to the peoples; and they shall bring your sons in their bosom, and your daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders. And kings shall be your nursing fathers, and their queens your nursing mothers: they shall bow down to you with their faces to the earth, and lick the dust of your feet; and you shall know that I am Jehovah; and they that wait for me shall not be put to shame.*

Again, the regathering of Israel is said to be with the aid of the Gentiles, who will conduct the Jews back into the Land (v. 22). At that time, the Gentiles of every social stratum will become the servants of Israel (v. 23a), and Israel will never again be shamed by them (v. 23b).

According to Isaiah 60:1-3, the reason why Israel will become the center of Gentile attention is due to the fact that the *Shechinah* Glory will abide over Israel:

> *Arise, shine; for your light is come, and the glory of Jehovah is risen upon you. For, behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the peoples; but Jehovah will arise upon you, and his glory shall be seen upon you. And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.*

Isaiah 61:4-9 states:

> *And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations. And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and foreigners shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers. But ye shall be named the priests of Jehovah; men shall call you the ministers of our God: ye shall eat the wealth of the nations, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves. Instead of your shame ye shall have double; and instead of dishonor they shall rejoice in their portion: therefore in their land they shall possess double; everlasting joy shall be unto them. For I, Jehovah, love justice, I hate robbery with iniquity; and I will give them their recompense in truth, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. And their seed shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples: all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed which Jehovah has blessed.*

When the regathering takes place, Israel will rebuild all the desolate cities of the Land (v. 4). At that time, the Gentiles will become servants to Israel, and will feed the flocks and plow the fields (v. 5). As for Israel, they will be the ministers of the Word to the Gentiles (v. 6a) and will receive the wealth of the Gentiles for their enjoyment (v. 6b). Israel will never again be shamed by the Gentiles, but rather they will receive a double portion of all blessings and possessions (v. 7). This will be the result of the New Covenant (v. 8). The Jews will be known among the Gentiles, and all the Gentiles will acknowledge that it is the Jews who have been especially chosen by God for special blessings (v. 9).

Isaiah's contemporary, Micah, also had something to say in this regard in Micah 7:14-17:

> *Feed your people with your rod, the flock of your heritage, which dwell solitarily, in the forest in the midst of Carmel: let them feed in Bashan and Gilead, as in the days of old. As in the days of your coming forth out of the land of Egypt will I show unto them marvellous things. The nations shall see and be ashamed of all their might; they shall lay their hand upon their mouth; their ears shall be deaf. They shall lick the dust like a serpent; like crawling things of the earth they shall come trembling out of their close places; they shall come with fear unto Jehovah our God, and shall be afraid because of you.*

Israel is to be regathered in order to possess the Land (v. 14), and this regathering will be accompanied by miracles (v. 15). When the Gentiles see this, they will cease reproaching the Jews and will have a reverential fear of the Jews. They will then submit to the God of Israel (vv. 16-17).

That Israel's final restoration will cause the Jews to become the center of Gentile attention was also revealed in Zephaniah 3:20:

> *At that time will I bring you in, and at that time will I gather you; for I will make you a name and a praise among all the peoples of the earth, when I bring back your captivity before your eyes, says Jehovah.*

Finally, in Zechariah 8:23, the prophet stated:

> *Thus says Jehovah of hosts: In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold, out of all the languages of the nations, they shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.*

In the past, when ten Gentiles grabbed the clothes of the Jew, it was for other reasons than to say, *Let us go with you, for we have heard God is with you*. At the time of the final restoration, the Jews will no longer be reproached. Instead, Jews will be treated with reverential respect, for they will be known as the ministers of God.

3. Righteousness, Holiness, Peace, Security, Joy, and Gladness

Another feature of Israel's final restoration combines the various characteristics of righteousness, holiness, peace, security, joy, and gladness. Righteousness and peace are the primary characteristics in Isaiah 32:16-20:

> *Then justice shall dwell in the wilderness; and righteousness shall abide in the fruitful field. And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and confidence for ever. And my people shall abide in a peaceable habitation, and in safe dwellings, and in quiet resting-places. But it shall hail in the downfall of the forest; and the city shall be utterly laid low. Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters, that send forth the feet of the ox and the ass.*

Holiness, peace, security, and joy are emphasized in Isaiah 35:5-10, things that will earmark the time of Israel's regathering:

> *Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the glowing sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water: in the habitation of jackals, where they lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes. And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for the redeemed: the wayfaring men, yea fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast go up thereon; they shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: and the ransomed of Jehovah shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads: they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.*

Joy and gladness are stressed in Isaiah 51:3:

> *For Jehovah has comforted Zion; he has comforted all her waste places, and has made her wilderness like Eden, and*

> *her desert like the garden of Jehovah; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.*

Joy and peace in nature and man are highlighted in Isaiah 55:12-13:

> *For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing; and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree; and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle-tree: and it shall be to Jehovah for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.*

In Isaiah 61:10-11, the emphasis is on the righteousness aspect:

> *I will greatly rejoice in Jehovah, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he has clothed me with garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its bud, and as the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord Jehovah will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.*

C. *The Millennial Mountain of Jehovah's House*

At the time of the Second Coming of the Messiah, the Land will undergo some tremendous geographical and topographical changes. One of the key changes in the Land of Israel will be the rise of a very high mountain that will become the highest mountain of the world. On top of this mountain the Millennial Temple and the Millennial Jerusalem will stand.

There are several passages that speak of this Millennial Mountain of Jehovah's House. One such place is Isaiah 2:2-4:

> *And it shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above*

> *the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many peoples shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem. And he will judge between the nations, and will decide concerning many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.*

This clearly states that the mountain upon which Jehovah's House will stand will be the highest of all the mountains, and by far the most exalted (v. 2a). All the nations will move toward it in pilgrimage in order to learn the ways of God because the Law of the Millennial Kingdom will emanate from this mountain (vv. 2b-3). This will result in worldwide peace because differences among the nations will be settled by the Word of the Lord that will come from the Mountain of Jehovah's House (vv. 3b-4).

Later, in Isaiah 27:13, the prophet pointed out that this high mountain will become the center of Jewish worship:

> *And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great trumpet shall be blown; and they shall come that were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and they that were outcasts in the land of Egypt; and they shall worship Jehovah in the holy mountain at Jerusalem.*

But not the Jews only, for Isaiah 56:6-8 points out the fact that this great Mountain of Jehovah's House will become a place of prayer for all peoples, Jews and Gentiles alike:

> *Also the foreigners that join themselves to Jehovah, to minister unto him, and to love the name of Jehovah, to be his servants, every one that keeps the sabbath from profaning it, and holds fast my covenant; even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon my altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.*

> *The Lord Jehovah, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, says, Yet will I gather others to him, besides his own that are gathered.*

By means of the Gentile nations, the people of Israel will be brought and regathered to the Mountain of Jehovah's House, according to Isaiah 66:20:

> *And they shall bring all your brethren out of all the nations for an oblation unto Jehovah, upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon dromedaries, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, says Jehovah, as the children of Israel bring their oblation in a clean vessel into the house of Jehovah.*

Isaiah's contemporary, the Prophet Micah, also spoke of this great Mountain in Micah 4:1-2 with words that are similar to, or quoting, Isaiah's:

> *But in the latter days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and peoples shall flow unto it. And many nations shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths. For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem; . . .*

The Mountain of Jehovah's House will be exalted above every mountain and hill (v. 1), and the law of God will proceed from this mountain (v. 2).

The prophet who received the most revelation regarding the Mountain of Jehovah's House was Ezekiel, who first introduced it in Ezekiel 17:22-24, which describes *the mountain of the height of Israel* as a place of lush greenery and vegetation:

> *Thus says the Lord Jehovah: I will also take of the lofty top of the cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the topmost of its young twigs a tender one, and I will plant it upon a high and lofty mountain: in the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it; and it shall bring forth boughs, and*

> *bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar: and under it shall dwell all birds of every wing; in the shade of the branches thereof shall they dwell. And all the trees of the field shall know that I, Jehovah, have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish: I, Jehovah, have spoken and have done it.*

Later, in Ezekiel 20:40-41, the prophet declared that the mountain will serve as the center of Jewish worship in the Kingdom. After Israel's regeneration and regathering, she will worship the Lord in this high, lofty, and holy mountain:

> *For in my holy mountain, in the mountain of the height of Israel, says the Lord Jehovah, there shall all the house of Israel, all of them, serve me in the land: there will I accept them, and there will I require your offerings, and the first-fruits of your oblations, with all your holy things. As a sweet savor will I accept you, when I bring you out from the peoples, and gather you out of the countries wherein ye have been scattered; and I will be sanctified in you in the sight of the nations.*

Only in the closing chapters of his book does Ezekiel give the details of what this very high Mountain of Jehovah's House will be like, in three different places. The first is in Ezekiel 40:1-4:

> *In the five and twentieth year of our captivity, in the beginning of the year, in the tenth day of the month, in the fourteenth year after that the city was smitten, in the selfsame day, the hand of Jehovah was upon me, and he brought me thither. In the visions of God brought he me into the land of Israel, and set me down upon a very high mountain, whereon was as it were the frame of a city on the south. And he brought me thither; and, behold, there was a man, whose appearance was like the appearance of brass, with a line of flax in his hand, and a measuring reed; and he stood in the gate. And the man said unto me, Son of man, behold with your eyes, and hear with your ears, and set your heart upon all that I shall show you; for, to the intent that I may show them unto you, are you brought hither: declare all that you see to the house of Israel.*

In the twenty-fifth year of the seventy years of Babylonian Captivity, Ezekiel was given a final, special revelation of Israel's future in the Messianic Kingdom (v. 1). As Isaiah and Micah before him, he saw a very high mountain which had the skyline of a city on its southern side (v. 2). As will be seen later, this city is the Millennial Jerusalem. Then a message is spoken to the prophet that he is about to be given certain revelations which he is to declare to the House of Israel (vv. 3-4).

The second passage, Ezekiel 45:1-8, describes in great detail the Mountain of Jehovah's house:

> *Moreover, when ye shall divide by lot the land for inheritance, ye shall offer an oblation unto Jehovah, a holy portion of the land; the length shall be the length of five and twenty thousand reeds, and the breadth shall be ten thousand: it shall be holy in all the border thereof round about. Of this there shall be for the holy place five hundred in length by five hundred in breadth, square round about; and fifty cubits for the suburbs thereof round about. And of this measure shall you measure a length of five and twenty thousand, and a breadth of ten thousand: and in it shall be the sanctuary, which is most holy. It is a holy portion of the land; it shall be for the priests, the ministers of the sanctuary, that come near to minister unto Jehovah; and it shall be a place for their houses, and a holy place for the sanctuary. And five and twenty thousand in length, and ten thousand in breadth, shall be unto the Levites, the ministers of the house, for a possession unto themselves, for twenty chambers. And ye shall appoint the possession of the city five thousand broad, and five and twenty thousand long, side by side with the oblation of the holy portion: it shall be for the whole house of Israel. And whatsoever is for the prince shall be on the one side and on the other side of the holy oblation and of the possession of the city, in front of the holy oblation and in front of the possession of the city, on the west side westward, and on the east side eastward; and in length answerable unto one of the portions, from the west border unto the east border. In the land it shall be to him for a possession in Israel: and my princes shall no more oppress my people; but they shall give the land to the house of Israel according to their tribes.*

This holy mountain is referred to as the Holy Oblation, because this section will be for holy ritual use and somewhere on this mountain the Millennial Temple is to stand, as well as the City of Jerusalem. This very high mountain, the highest in the world, will itself have a fifty-mile square plateau on top (v. 1). This square plateau will be subdivided into three sections. The northern section (vv. 2-4) will be twenty miles by fifty miles, having in its center the Millennial Temple, which will be about one mile square. The rest of the area of the northern section will be reserved for a certain group of priests to live in. The central section (v. 5) will also be twenty miles by fifty miles and will be reserved for the members of the Tribe of Levi. The southern section (vv. 6-8) will be ten miles by fifty miles. In the center of the southern section will stand the Millennial Jerusalem, measuring ten miles by ten miles. On either side of the city will be field areas, each measuring ten by twenty miles, for growing food. These areas will be controlled by the prince, the resurrected David, who will apportion the Land according to tribe.

The third place Ezekiel described the details of the Mountain of Jehovah's House is in Ezekiel 48:8-20:

> *And by the border of Judah, from the east side unto the west side, shall be the oblation which ye shall offer, five and twenty thousand reeds in breadth, and in length as one of the portions, from the east side unto the west side: and the sanctuary shall be in the midst of it. The oblation that ye shall offer unto Jehovah shall be five and twenty thousand reeds in length, and ten thousand in breadth. And for these, even for the priests, shall be the holy oblation; toward the north five and twenty thousand in length, and toward the west ten thousand in breadth, and toward the east ten thousand in breadth, and toward the south five and twenty thousand in length: and the sanctuary of Jehovah shall be in the midst thereof. It shall be for the priests that are sanctified of the sons of Zadok, that have kept my charge, that went not astray when the children of Israel went astray, as the Levites went astray. And it shall be unto them an oblation from the oblation of the land, a thing most holy, by the border of the Levites. And answerable unto the border of the priests, the Levites shall have five and twenty thousand in length, and ten thou-*

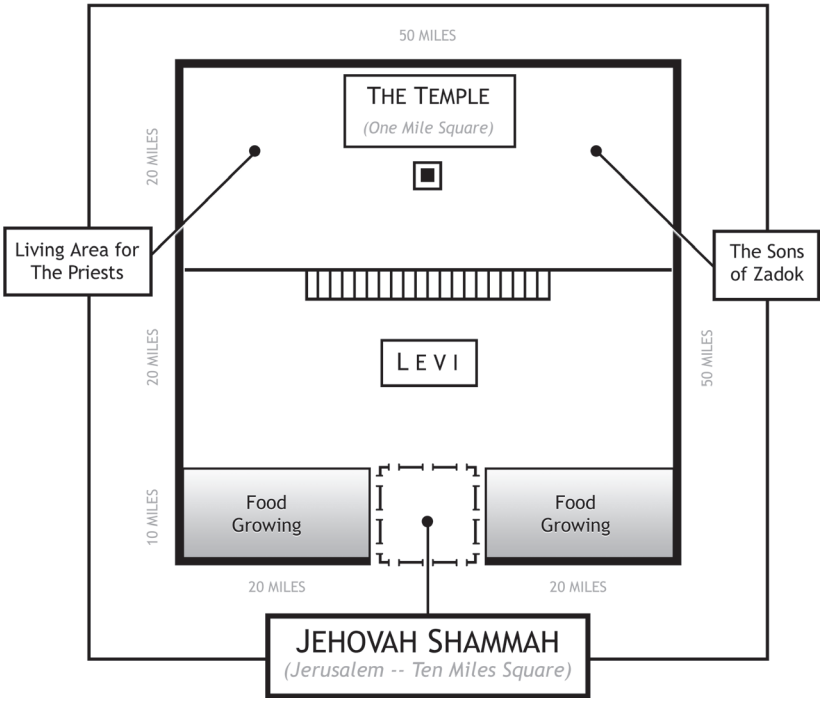
sand in breadth: all the length shall be five and twenty thousand, and the breadth ten thousand. And they shall sell none of it, nor exchange it, nor shall the first-fruits of the land be alienated; for it is holy unto Jehovah. And the five thousand that are left in the breadth, in front of the five and twenty thousand, shall be for common use, for the city, for dwelling and for suburbs; and the city shall be in the midst thereof. And these shall be the measures thereof: the north side four thousand and five hundred, and the south side four thousand and five hundred, and on the east side four thousand and five hundred, and the west side four thousand and five hundred. And the city shall have suburbs: toward the north two hundred and fifty, and toward the south two hundred and fifty, and toward the east two hundred and fifty, and toward the west two hundred and fifty. And the residue in the length, answerable unto the holy oblation, shall be ten thousand eastward, and ten thousand westward; and it shall be answerable unto the holy oblation; and the increase thereof shall be for food unto them that labor in the city. And they that labor in the city, out of all the tribes of Israel, shall till it. All the oblation shall be five and twenty thousand by five and twenty thousand: ye shall offer the holy oblation four-square, with the possession of the city.

After announcing that the high mountain is to be fifty miles square (v. 8), Ezekiel begins to describe the northern section (vv. 9-12). This northern section will be twenty miles by fifty miles (v. 9) and will be inhabited by priests, for in the very center of this section, the Millennial Temple is to stand (v. 10). The priests who are to occupy this area around the Temple are the descendants of Zadok, because that segment of the Tribe of Levi remained faithful while the rest went astray (vv. 11-12). The central section (vv. 13-14) will also measure twenty miles by fifty miles. This area will be reserved for the rest of the Tribe of Levi, those Levites who did not belong to the line of Zadok. The southern section (vv. 15-19) is to measure ten miles by fifty miles, in the middle of which the Millennial Jerusalem is to be built (vv. 15-16). Jerusalem will be in the very center of this southern section and will measure ten miles by ten miles (v. 17). The two remaining portions

of the southern section, east and west of Jerusalem, will each measure ten miles by twenty miles, and will be for the purpose of growing food for the inhabitants of Jerusalem (v. 18). Jerusalem will not belong to any particular tribe but will be inhabited by members of all the Twelve Tribes of Israel (v. 19).

Again, Ezekiel states that the total size of this Mountain of Jehovah's House is to be fifty miles square. It will be the Holy Oblation upon which both the Temple and Jerusalem will sit (v. 20).

Putting all these passages together, the Mountain of Jehovah's House can be illustrated as follows:



D. The Millennial Temple— Ezekiel 40:5-43:27

In Ezekiel 37:26-28, Ezekiel prophesied that God's Sanctuary will be

placed in the midst of Israel:

> *Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And the nations shall know that I am Jehovah that sanctifies Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore.*

There is a great expansion and elaboration of these few verses in Ezekiel 40:5-43:27. The study of this lengthy passage will need to be limited to a survey of the material given by Ezekiel, emphasizing only a few important features. There are eight main sections which discuss the various facets of the Millennial Temple.

The first section, in 40:5-27, concerns the outer court. After the measure of the outer wall (v. 5), Ezekiel gives a description of the outer court (vv. 6-27), mentioning the eastern gate (vv. 6-16), the thirty chambers and the pavement around the outer court (vv. 17-19), the northern gate (vv. 20-23) and the southern gate (vv. 24-27).

The second section has a description of the inner court, in Ezekiel 40:28-47. There are four things which are described. The *first* item is the gates of the inner court (vv. 28-37), composed of the southern gate area (vv. 28-31), the eastern gate area (vv. 32-34) and the northern gate area (vv. 35-37); *second*, the prophet describes the table for the preparing of the sacrifices (vv. 38-43); *third*, the chambers for the ministering priests (vv. 44-46); and *fourth*, the Altar (v. 47).

The third section describes the Millennial Temple itself, in Ezekiel 40:48-41:26. Included in this description are the porch (vv. 48-49), the posts (v. 1), the Holy Place with its entrance (v. 2), the Holy of Holies (vv. 3-4), the Temple wall and chambers (vv. 5-11), the separate place (vv. 12-14), the interior of the Temple (vv. 15-20), and the exterior of the Temple (vv. 21-26). From all these various measurements, it is evident that this particular Temple will be larger than all previous Temples, measuring about one mile square. The area of the present Temple Compound is not large enough to hold the Temple described by Ezekiel and will require some major geographical changes. That is why the new Mountain of Jehovah's House will be necessary.

The fourth section describes the chambers of the outer court in Ezekiel 42:1-14.

The fifth section describes the outer wall in Ezekiel 42:15-20.

The sixth section records the return of the *Shechinah* Glory, in Ezekiel 43:1-9. Just as the *Shechinah* Glory authenticated and sanctioned the Solomonic Temple, it will also sanction this Temple by its return from the same direction that it left (vv. 1-5). Once the *Shechinah* Glory returns it will declare a message in which the promise will be made that the *Shechinah* Glory will never depart from Israel again, but will dwell in the midst of Israel forever (vv. 6-9).[1]

The seventh section, Ezekiel 43:10-12, is a *command to the prophet* to point out the sinfulness of Israel. In light of the coming Holy Oblation, how much more should Israel be ashamed of their present sinfulness.

The eighth section is a description of the Altar, in Ezekiel 43:13-27. Included in this description is the measure of the Altar (vv. 13-17) and the consecration of the Altar (vv. 18-23).

This, then, is the Millennial Temple that is to be the center of Jewish and Gentile worship during the Millennium.[2]

E. The Millennial System of Priesthood and Sacrifice—Ezekiel 44:1-46:24

These three chapters of Ezekiel are concerned with the various laws regulating the millennial system of priesthood and sacrifice. While there are similarities with the commandments of the Law of Moses, there are also some marked differences. For this reason, the millennial system of priesthood and sacrifice must not be viewed as a reinstitution of the Law of Moses, which ended permanently and forever with the death of the Messiah. During the Messianic Kingdom, a whole new system of law, Kingdom Law, will be instituted. There will be no reinstitution of any previous code of law.

This particular passage of Scripture has seven major sections dealing with this theme. The first section, in Ezekiel 44:1-3, concerns the

---

1 For further details see Appendix IV, The *Shechinah* Glory in History and Prophecy.

2 See pages 481-484 for charts depicting these descriptions by Ezekiel.

law of the outer eastern gate. The passage states that in the beginning of the Millennium, the outer eastern gate will be shut, never to be reopened again throughout the Millennium (v. 1). The reason for the shutting of the outer eastern gate is due to the fact that the *Shechinah* Glory returned by way of the eastern gate (Ezek. 43:1-9), never to leave Israel again (v. 2). The closing of the outer eastern gate will symbolize the fact that the *Shechinah* Glory will never depart from Israel again. Ezekiel then describes the prince and the authority and ministry he will have in relation to this outer eastern gate (v. 3). The prince, as has already been shown, will be the resurrected David. He will eat before the gate (v. 3a), and entrance will be by means of the porch only (v. 3b). Since this gate will be permanently closed, entry and exit into and out of the porch will have to be from and into the outer court. It should be pointed out that this passage of Scripture has nothing to do with the present eastern gate of Jerusalem, known today as the Golden Gate. This passage, in its context, is not dealing with Jerusalem today, but is dealing with the Temple Gate in the Millennium. The gate of Jesus' day was destroyed in A.D. 70. The present Golden Gate was built in the seventh century and later modified by the Crusaders. It was partially destroyed by the Ottoman Turks and rebuilt in the early sixteenth century. It was walled up by the Turkish governor of Jerusalem in 1530.

The second section (Ezek. 44:4-8) contains another message of the *Shechinah* Glory which again points out Israel's present sins.

The third section (Ezek. 44:9-14) describes the duties of the Levites, who will be the caretakers of the Temple.

The fourth section (Ezek. 44:15-31) concerns the duties of the sons of Zadok, who will be in charge of the sacrifices of the Temple.[3]

The fifth section (Ezek. 45:1-8) describes the Holy Oblation or the Mountain of Jehovah's House, which has already been discussed and diagrammed in this chapter.

The sixth section (Ezek. 45:9-46:18) describes the duties of the prince, David. Three things are stated concerning his duties. *First*: unlike in Israel's past history when the princes of Israel used false measures, the law of the measurements (45:9-12) will be characterized by true,

---

[3] According to Isaiah 66:21, there will also be Gentile priests. See Chapter 20, The Gentiles in the Messianic Kingdom.

faithful, and just balances. *Second*: the duties will involve the carrying out of the laws of the offerings (45:13-46:15). After listing some general instructions (vv. 13-17), Ezekiel describes the law relating to the New Year offerings (vv. 18-20), the Passover offerings (vv. 21-24), the offerings for the Feast of Tabernacles (v. 25), and the Sabbath offerings (vv. 1-5), which will take place at the inner eastern gate. The inner eastern gate will be shut for six days, but will always be opened on the Sabbath throughout the Kingdom period. Then, the New Moon offerings are described (vv. 6-8), along with the special festival offerings (vv. 9-12) and the daily sacrifices (vv. 13-15). *Third*: the prince will have some special rights because of his exalted position in relation to the Temple (46:16-18).

The seventh section (Ezek. 46:19-24) concerns the laws of the boiling of the sacrifices.

One of the things present in the Solomonic Temple that will be absent in the Millennial Temple is the Ark of the Covenant, according to Jeremiah 3:16:

> *And it shall come to pass, when ye are multiplied and increased in the land, in those days, says Jehovah, they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of Jehovah; neither shall it come to mind; neither shall they remember it; neither shall they miss it; neither shall it be made any more.*

Since God Himself in the Person of the Messiah will be dwelling in and reigning from Jerusalem, there will be no need for any Ark of the Covenant. Furthermore, the Ark of the Covenant contained the tablets of stone that were the embodiment of the Law of Moses. The fact that the Law of Moses is no longer in effect is another reason why the Ark of the Covenant will be missing.

To summarize, there will be a sacrificial system instituted in the Millennium that will have some features similar to the Mosaic system, along with some brand-new laws. For that very reason, the sacrificial system of the Millennium must not be viewed as a reinstitution of the Mosaic system, because it is not. It will be a brand-new system that will contain some things old and some things new, and will be instituted for an entirely different purpose.

A common argument against taking these verses literally is the

question as to why such a system would be necessary, since the Messiah has already died. If the death of the Messiah was the final sacrifice for sin, how could these animal sacrifices provide an expiation for sin? Therefore, some say, these chapters of Ezekiel must not be taken literally. But if not, Ezekiel gives a lot of detail that would suddenly become meaningless. Furthermore, if all that detail is intended to be symbolic, the symbols are never explained. So the non-literalist is forced to be subjective in expounding them and must resort to guesswork, and for that reason have come up with a large variety of contradictory views. The literal approach is the safest method to gain understanding of these passages. There are at least four reasons to take this whole section of Ezekiel literally.

First: This is the normal hermeneutic used elsewhere in Scripture and all theologies use the literal approach in at least parts of the Bible. Only the Dispensationalist uses the literal approach consistently. Such a consistent usage leads to the conclusion that there will be a Millennial Temple and sacrifice.

Second: Ezekiel is not the only one to speak of the Millennial Temple and sacrifices. Other prophets spoke of these things in a non-apocalyptic context. The Millennial Temple is spoken of in Isaiah 2:3; 60:13; Daniel 9:24; Joel 3:18; and Haggai 2:7, 9. The millennial sacrifices are mentioned in Isaiah 56:6-7; 60:7; 66:18-23; Jeremiah 33:18; Malachi 3:3-4; and Zechariah 14:16-21 (this last passage speaks of the observance of the Feast of Tabernacles in the Messianic Kingdom, but it required special sacrifices as part of its observance). Therefore, more than one passage and more than one prophet would have to be allegorized away if there were no Millennial Temple or millennial sacrifice.

Third: The Millennial Temple is not the only temple that Ezekiel describes. In chapters 8-11, he describes the departure of the *Shechinah* Glory from Israel from the First Temple. All agree that his description of the Temple and the events that happen there are very literal. In chapters 40-48, Ezekiel describes the future return of the *Shechinah* Glory into the Fourth Temple. If what he said about the First Temple was literal, then what he says about the Fourth Temple should also be taken literally.

Fourth: Ezekiel provides a tremendous amount of detail which includes specific measurements and types of sacrifices. All accept the

details of the sacrifices of the Law of Moses to be very literal. All accept the detailed measurements of the Tabernacle and the First Temple to be very literal. There is no good reason not to accept the details of the Fourth Temple to be equally literal. If they are not and are all symbolic, then why does Ezekiel not explain the meanings of these symbols? Why have those who take these passages as allegorical and symbolic not been able to give explanations for what the symbols mean? This is not to deny that the Millennial Temple and sacrifices are not symbolic of spiritual truths. Just as the Tabernacle and the Mosaic sacrifices were symbolic and typological of spiritual truths while very literal themselves, by the same token, the Millennial Temple and sacrifices can be literal while also being symbolic of spiritual truths. The very fact that Ezekiel was ordered to write down all the details and declare all the details to the House of Israel would be meaningless if such details did not mean what they said.

There are usually three main objections to taking these sacrifices literally.

First objection: This would mean a return to the sacrificial system of the Mosaic Law which ended when Messiah died and therefore violates all that the New Testament teaches about the termination of the Law as a rule of life.

Answer: While there are many similarities with the sacrifices of the Mosaic Law, as there are between the sacrifices of Noah and Moses, the differences show they are not the same. It was these very differences that kept the rabbis from accepting Ezekiel into the Hebrew Canon for some time. These differences include the following. In the consecration of the altar (Mosaic: Exodus 29:1-37; Millennial: Ezekiel 43:18-27) there are the following differences: the Mosaic anointed the altar, while the Ezekiel had no anointing; the Mosaic offered a bullock for a sin offering for all seven days, while the Ezekiel offered a bullock on the first day only; the Mosaic offered no goat, while the Ezekiel offers goats for the last six days; the Mosaic applied blood on the horns of the altar only, while the Ezekiel applies blood on the horns, the corners, and upon the lower molding round about; for the burnt offering, the Mosaic offered a ram every day, while the Ezekiel offers both a bullock and a ram every day. The Mosaic offered a ram for the consecration of the priesthood, but Ezekiel has no ram for the consecration of the priesthood, only for the altar. The Mosaic had the Ark of the Covenant, but the Millennial

Temple will not have the Ark of the Covenant (Jeremiah 3:16). Under the Mosaic Law, only the high priest could enter the Holy of Holies, but in Ezekiel 44:15-16, all priests will be able to enter. The rules of marriage found in 44:22 were applicable to only the high priest under the Mosaic Law, but in Ezekiel, they will be applicable to all priests. Under the Mosaic Law, the first of *Nisan* was not a special holy day, but will be under the Ezekiel system (45:18). The procedure described in 45:19 differs from the Mosaic in two ways: in the animal chosen, the Mosaic had a male goat, while the Ezekiel has a bullock; in the way the animal was disposed of, the Mosaic disposed of the animal outside the camp, while the Ezekiel is inside the camp. Concerning the Passover (45:21-24), in the Mosaic, the Passover was a family affair with the head of the household performing the ritual, while in the Ezekiel, the Prince will perform the ritual on behalf of the nation. In the Mosaic, the Passover was a one day festival, while in the Ezekiel, it will last for seven days. The Mosaic offered an unblemished lamb, while the Ezekiel offers a bullock. There is also a difference in the number of sacrifices offered between the Mosaic (Num. 28:16-24) and the Ezekiel. There is also a difference in the measures of the meal offering between the Mosaic and the Ezekiel. Concerning the Feast of Tabernacles (45:25), there is a difference in the quantity of the offerings (Num. 29:12-34), and the Ezekiel does not have the added eighth day that the Mosaic had (Num. 29:35-38). As for the Sabbath offerings (46:4-5), the Ezekiel requires six lambs and a ram, which is more than the Mosaic (Num. 28:9), which required only two lambs and a ram, and the same will be true with the meal offering. Concerning the New Moon offerings (46:6-7), the Mosaic required two bulls, one ram, and seven lambs, while the Ezekiel will require one bullock, six lambs, and one ram. There is also a difference in the daily offering (46:13-15), since the Mosaic (Ex. 29:38-42; Num. 28:3-4) required two lambs each day, both morning and evening, while the Ezekiel will require one lamb each morning and none in the evening. There is also a difference in the daily meal offering (Ex. 29:40; Num. 28:5). In the Mosaic Law, the observance of the Feast of Tabernacles was mandatory for Jews only, while under Kingdom Law, it will be mandatory for both Jews and Gentiles (Zech. 14:16-21). Under the Law of Moses, only Jews could be priests, but under Kingdom Law, Gentiles will also serve as priests (Is. 66:18-21). All these differences show that this is not a return to

the Law of Moses, but it is a new system under Kingdom Law and so it does not violate what the New Testament teaches concerning the termination of the Law with Messiah's death.

Second objection: The measurements given by Ezekiel will not fit the Temple Mount, and therefore cannot be literal.

Answer: It is true that the size of the Ezekiel Temple will not fit the Temple Mount but it is a misconception that the Ezekiel Temple was intended to be built on that mount. The details Ezekiel gives shows that there will be some major geographical changes resulting from the Second Coming. As already shown, some of these changes will create a new temple mount altogether (see the charts at the end of the chapter for details).

Third objection: To believe in the reinstitution of the blood sacrifices is heresy.

Answer: Since when is taking the Bible literally and believing it literally a heresy? The burden of proof is always on the one who claims that a certain part of the Bible does not mean what it says. Just because there are no blood sacrifices for the Church does not mean there cannot be such sacrifices for Israel. Just because there is no physical temple, priesthood, and sacrifice for the Church does not mean the same will be true for Israel.

But what will be the purpose of these sacrifices in light of Messiah's death? To begin with, it should be remembered that the sacrificial system of the Mosaic Law did not remove sins either (Heb. 10:4), but only covered them (the meaning of "atonement" in Hebrew). The Mosaic sacrifices did not serve only one purpose, but were multipurposed. One such purpose was to serve as a physical and visual picture of what the Messiah would do (Is. 53:10-12). The Kingdom sacrifices will also be multipurposed and there are at least four purposes for the sacrificial system that can be suggested.

First: A memorial of the death of the Messiah. This view teaches that the sacrifices will play for Israel a similar role that Communion plays for the Church. Since the Mosaic sacrifices looked forward to the sacrifice of the Messiah, why could not the Kingdom sacrifices look back and commemorate the sacrifice on the cross? The Church has been asked to do something very physical, to partake of the bread and the cup, to

remember the body and the blood of the Messiah. This ceremony is to be terminated with the Second Coming (I Corinthians 11:26). What will be used to remember the Lord's death by Israel in the Messianic Kingdom? The blood sacrifices of the Kingdom will also be a physical ceremony to serve for Israel what communion serves for the Church: to remember the body and blood of the Messiah.

Second: The means of restoring fellowship for the millennial saint. The Mosaic sacrifices never took away sin and were not the means of salvation for the Old Testament saint (Hebrews 10:1-4). The Old Testament saint was saved by grace through faith. The blood sacrifices were the means of restoring fellowship of the Mosaic saint who sinned. In this age, fellowship for the believer is restored by confession (I John 1:9). The millennial sacrifices will not take away sin either, but they will be the means of restoring fellowship for the millennial saint who sins.

Third: Ritual cleansing for ritual uncleanness. Since the *Shechinah* Glory will be within the Holy of Holies of the Millennial Temple, it would be impossible to approach the Temple compound in a state of ritual impurity and therefore the sacrifices will be for the cleansing of ceremonial uncleanness. Ice expresses it this way:

> *Critics of future millennial sacrifices seem to assume that all sacrifices, past and future, always depict Christ's final sacrifice for sin. They do not! There were various purposes for sacrifices in the Bible. An overwhelming majority of sacrifices under the Mosaic system were for purification of the priests and objects used in various rites. This is why atonement can be said in the past to be effective, yet still need Christ's future sacrifice, because many of the sacrifices did atone ceremonially, cleansing participants and objects in Temple ritual. Just as we never finish the task of washing clothes, ceremonial cleansing was an ongoing need. The same is clearly the case in Ezekiel. In Ezekiel 43:20 and 26, the atonement is specifically directed at cleansing the altar in order to make it ritually fit for sacrifice. The only other uses of atonement also refer to cleansing objects so that ritual purity may be maintained for proper function of further worship (Ezekiel 45:15, 17, 20).... Since all the sacrifices of Ezekiel relate to purification of the priests for Temple service, they do not specifically depict or represent Christ's atoning sacrifice.*

> *The presence and purpose of sacrifices neither diminishes the finished work of Christ nor violates the normal and "literal" interpretation of the prophetic passages. Nothing in Ezekiel 40-48 conflicts with the death of Christ or New Testament teaching at any point. The supposed contradictions between a literal understanding of Ezekiel and New Testament doctrine evaporate when examined specifically.*[4]

Jerry Hullinger also reaches the same conclusion:

> *A solution that maintains dispensational distinctives, deals honestly with the text of Ezekiel, and in no way demeans the work Christ did on the cross. This study suggests that animal sacrifices during the Millennium will serve primarily to remove ceremonial uncleanness and prevent defilement from polluting the temple envisioned by Ezekiel. This will be necessary because the glorious presence of Yahweh will once again be dwelling on earth in the midst of a sinful and unclean people.... Because of God's promise to dwell on earth during the Millennium (as stated in the New Covenant), it is necessary that He protect His presence through sacrifice.... It should further be added that this sacrificial system will be a temporary one in that the Millennium (with its partial population of unglorified humanity) will last only one thousand years. During the eternal state all inhabitants of the New Jerusalem will be glorified and will therefore not be a source of contagious impurities to defile the holiness of Yahweh.*[5]

Fourth: The privilege of life and physical blessing in a theocratic kingdom. Dr. John C. Whitcomb of Grace Theological Seminary provides an additional and significant perspective on the millennial sacrifices.[6] The subscript of the article summarizes his position:

---

4 Ice, Thomas. "Literal Sacrifices in the Millennium," *Pre-Trib Perspectives*, June 2000, pp. 4-5.

5 Hullinger, Jerry. "The Problem of Animal Sacrifices in Ezekiel 40-48," *Bibliotheca Sacra*, July-September 1995, pp. 281, 289.

6 Whitcomb, John C. "Christ's Atonement and Animal Sacrifices in Israel," *Grace Theological Journal*, Fall 1985, pp. 201-21.

> *The future function of the millennial temple (Ezek. 40-48) has long been problematic for dispensationalists in view of the finished work of Christ. Light is shed on this problem by noting the original theocratic purpose of OT sacrifices. This purpose was functionally distinct from that of the redemptive work of Christ. Millennial sacrifices will not simply memorialize Christ's redemption but will primarily function in restoring theocratic harmony. The differences between the Old Covenant stipulations and those of Ezekiel 40-48 can be accounted for in terms of this solution.*[7]

Whitcomb emphasizes that there was a functional difference between the purpose of the animal sacrifices and the purpose of Messiah's sacrifice.[8] To the question, "What was the function of animal sacrifices in the Old Covenant?" Whitcomb responds that *animal sacrifices would never remove spiritual guilt from the offerer*, citing Hebrews 10:4 and 11 as evidence. This, of course, is something that has general agreement among all theologians of all schools. But Whitcomb also points out that *it is equally erroneous to say that the sacrifices were mere teaching symbols given by God to Israel to prepare them for Messiah and his infinite atonement*. While this was certainly a purpose of animal sacrifices, *it could not have been their exclusive purpose from the perspective of Old Covenant Israelites*. Citing a number of clear statements from the Law of Moses, Whitcomb shows what the animal sacrifices did with regard to forgiveness and atonement. The real issue is not whether forgiveness and atonement took place, but rather the *precise nature* of this forgiveness and atonement. Whitcomb states that whatever happened was *temporal, finite, external, and legal—not eternal, infinite, internal, and soteriological*. His point is that this forgiveness and atonement was not a spiritual one for, *No one was ever spiritually regenerated by works, not even by fulfilling legally prescribed sacrifices, offerings and other Mosaic requirements*. The Old Testament believer received his spiritual salvation because of *a heart response to whatever special revelation of God was available at that time in history*, but this saving faith did not necessarily

---

7 Ibid., p. 201.

8 Ibid., pp. 208-210.

include a knowledge of a crucified Messiah, since such a view *does not do justice to the progress of revelation*. While the death of the Messiah *has always been and always will be the final basis of spiritual salvation*, this is not the same as saying that it was the *knowledge-content* of saving faith. It was faith and not the works of animal sacrifices that saved. What the animal sacrifices of the Law of Moses did achieve was *national/theocratic forgiveness* for *national/theocratic transgressions*. They provided for external cleansing and outward efficacy. Under the Mosaic Law, the choice was not *either faith or sacrifices; rather, it was to be both faith and sacrifices*. The former resulted in spiritual salvation and the latter was for *the cleanness of the flesh* in accordance with Hebrews 9:13. Applying these truths to the millennial sacrifices, Whitcomb affirms that *future sacrifices will have nothing to do with eternal salvation which only comes through true faith in God*. However, these future animal sacrifices will also be efficacious, but *only in terms of the strict provision for ceremonial (and thus temporal) forgiveness within the theocracy of Israel*. Whitcomb's conclusion on this point is:

> *Thus, animal sacrifices during the coming Kingdom age will not be primarily memorial (like the Eucharist in church communion services), any more than sacrifices in the age of the Old Covenant were primarily prospective or prophetic in the understanding of the offerer.*[9]

> *The distinction between ceremonial and spiritual atonement is by no means a minor one, for it is at the heart of the basic difference between the theocracy of Israel and the Church, the Body and Bride of Christ. It also provides a more consistent hermeneutical approach for dispensational Premillennialism.*[10]

Whitcomb also rejects the notion that the millennial sacrifice is a reinstitution of the Mosaic Law, and notes that the differences between the two systems means that the millennial sacrificial system is a distinct system arising out of the New Covenant, not the Mosaic Covenant. Whitcomb also makes the following observation:

---

9 Ibid., p. 210.
10 Ibid., p. 211.

However, such sacrifices will not be totally voluntary and purely memorial as is true of the Christian Eucharist. Ezekiel says that God will "accept" people on the basis of animal sacrifices (43:27), and they are "to make atonement for the house of Israel" (45:17; cf. 45:15). In other words, just as in Old Testament times, the privilege of life and physical blessing in the theocratic kingdom will be contingent upon outward conformity to the ceremonial law. Such conformity did not bring salvation in Old Testament times, but saved Israelites willingly conformed. Only faith in God could bring salvation, and this has been God's plan in every dispensation. It is a serious mistake, therefore, to insist that these sacrifices will be expiatory. They were certainly not expiatory in the Mosaic economy… and they will not be so in the Millennium. But their symbolic and pedagogic value, unlike the communion service, will be upheld by a legalistic system of enforced participation. For example, those who decide to neglect the annual Feast of Tabernacles will be punished by a drought or a plague... If the true significance of the five offerings be understood, it is not difficult to see how they could serve as effective vehicles of divine instruction and discipline for Israel and the nations during the Kingdom age.[11]

F. The Millennial River—Ezekiel 47:1-12

All together there are three passages that speak about the Millennial River. One of these is this Ezekiel passage, which depicts the river as beginning in the Temple Compound and eventually making its way south to the Dead Sea. The entire Ezekiel passage is summarized in Joel 3:18:

And it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down sweet wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the brooks of Judah shall flow

[11] Whitcomb, John C. "The Millennial Temple of Ezekiel 40-48," *The Diligent Workman Journal*, May 1994, p. 22. For a detailed defense of this position see "Christ's Atonement and Animal Sacrifices in Israel," *Grace Theological Journal* 6:2, Fall 1985, pgs. 201-217.

> *with waters; and a fountain shall come forth from the house of Jehovah, and shall water the valley of Shittim.*

According to Joel, the Millennial River will originate at the Temple building itself.

The point of origin is further described in Ezekiel 47:1-2:

> *And he brought me back unto the door of the house; and, behold, waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward; (for the forefront of the house was toward the east;) and the waters came down from under, from the right side of the house, on the south of the altar. Then he brought me out by the way of the gate northward, and led me round by the way without unto the outer gate, by the way of the gate that looks toward the east; and, behold, there ran out waters on the right side.*

From the front part of the Temple, by the threshold of the door and the right side of the Altar which will stand in front of the Temple, the Millennial River will gush out, first leading east until it passes the eastern gate and then heading south toward the Dead Sea.

It will not flow directly from the Temple to the Dead Sea, but will first flow to Jerusalem, as depicted in Zechariah 14:8:

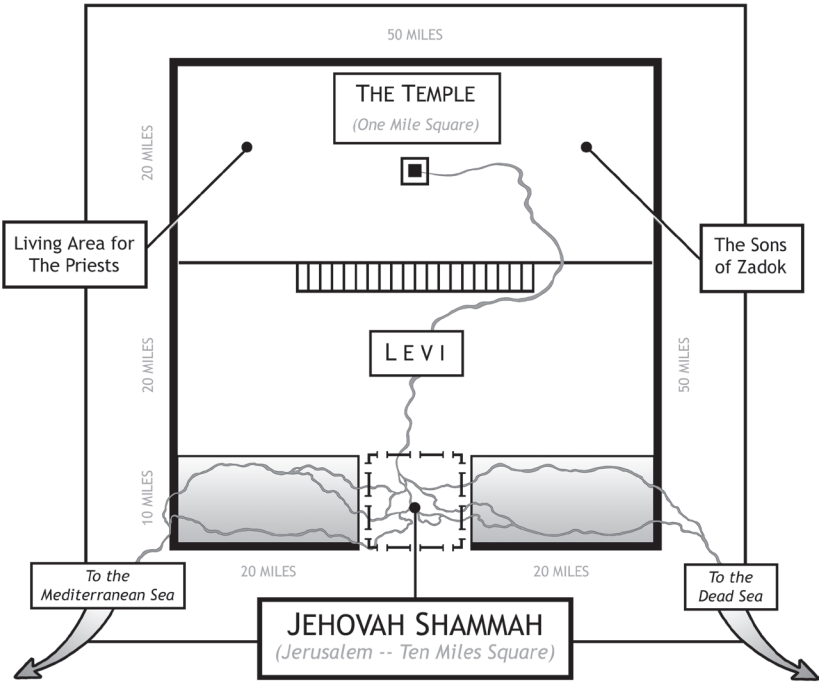
> *And it shall come to pass in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the eastern sea, and half of them toward the western sea: in summer and in winter shall it be.*

While the river will begin in the Temple and initially flow eastward, it is clear from this passage that it will flow southward to the City of Jerusalem, where it will be divided into two branches. The western branch will flow down the mountain and empty into the Mediterranean Sea. The eastern branch will flow into the Dead Sea. The branching out of these waters toward the areas designated for growing food on both sides of Jerusalem will provide the necessary water for the growth of the crops.

Since the eastern branch empties into the Dead Sea, the character of the Dead Sea will change. It will begin swarming with life, as prophesied in Ezekiel 47:8-10:

Then said he unto me, These waters issue forth toward the eastern region, and shall go down into the Arabah; and they shall go toward the sea; into the sea shall the waters go which were made to issue forth; and the waters shall be healed. And it shall come to pass, that every living creature which swarms, in every place whither the rivers come, shall live; and there shall be a very great multitude of fish; for these waters are come thither, and the waters of the sea shall be healed, and every thing shall live whithersoever the river comes. And it shall come to pass, that fishers shall stand by it: from En-gedi even unto Eneglaim shall be a place for the spreading of nets; their fish shall be after their kinds, as the fish of the great sea, exceeding many.

Adding this information to our previous illustration, it can be pictured as follows:



G. The Millennial Israel—Ezekiel 47:13-48:29

For the first time in Israel's history, the Jews will possess and settle in all of the Promised Land, and it will again be subdivided into the twelve tribal divisions. But these tribal divisions will be different than those described in the Book of Joshua. This portion of Ezekiel can be subdivided into five sections describing Israel in the Messianic Kingdom.

In the first section (47:13-14) Ezekiel states that the division of all of the Promised Land will be the final fulfillment of God's covenant promises.

The second section (Ezek. 47:15-20) deals with the boundaries of the Land in the Millennium. The northern boundary will extend from the Mediterranean Sea, incorporating much of modern-day Lebanon and parts of modern Syria over to the Euphrates River (vv. 15-17). The eastern border will move south from the Euphrates River, incorporating the Golan Heights and portions of Syria almost up to Damascus, and continue south to the Jordan River where it exits from the Sea of Galilee. The border will then run along the river all the way down to the southern end of the Dead Sea (v. 18). The southern border will move from the southern end of the Dead Sea, incorporating the Negev and parts of Sinai all the way along the Brook of Egypt, the modern *Wadi-el-Arish*, to the point where it reaches the Mediterranean Sea (v. 19). The Mediterranean Sea will serve as the western border (v. 20).

The third section (Ezek. 48:1-7) describes the northern division of the Land as subdivided for seven of the Twelve Tribes. The tribes will be settled running from north to south in the following order: Dan (v. 1), Asher (v. 2), Naphtali (v. 3), Manasseh (v. 4), Ephraim (v. 5), Reuben (v. 6), and Judah (v. 7). The western and eastern borders will parallel each other.

The fourth section (Ezek. 48:8-22) describes the Holy Oblation, discussed earlier in this chapter. But now Ezekiel notes the exact location of this Mountain of Jehovah's House. The Mountain of the Holy Oblation will be situated at the south of Judah's border and will serve as the dividing line between the seven northern tribes and the five southern tribes.

Then the fifth section (Ezek. 48:23-29) describes the division of the Land for the remaining five tribes. Again, running from north to south,

Israel in the Messianic Kingdom
Lands Controlled by the Tribes of Israel
DAN
ASHER
NAPHTALI
MANASSEH
EPHRAIM
REUBEN
JUDAH
The Prince's Portion
BENJAMIN
SIMEON
ISSACHAR
ZEBULUN
GAD
DETAIL OF THE MILLENNIAL MOUNTAIN OF JEHOVAH'S HOUSE
THE TEMPLE
(One Mile Square)
Sons of Zadok
LEVI
Living Area for Priests
JEHOVAH SHAMMAH
(Jerusalem -- Ten Miles Square)

Chart #10

the tribes will be settled in the following order: Benjamin (v. 23), Simeon (v. 24), Issachar (v. 25), Zebulun (v. 26), and Gad (v. 27) running along the southern border (vv. 28-29).

The Millennial Israel along with the Holy Oblation can be illustrated with the chart found on the preceeding page.

H. The Millennial Jerusalem— Ezekiel 48:30-35

Ezekiel closes the final section of his book with a short description of the Millennial Jerusalem, adding details not found elsewhere in the Prophets. All four sides of the city are described, along with the gates and their names. The city gates will all be named after the twelve sons of Jacob. The north side (vv. 30-31) will measure ten miles (v. 30), and the three gates will be named Reuben, Judah, and Levi (v. 31). The eastern side (v. 32) will measure ten miles (v. 32a), and its gates will be named Joseph, Benjamin, and Dan (v. 32b). The southern side (v. 33) will measure ten miles (v. 33a) with its three gates named Simeon, Issachar, and Zebulun (v. 33b). Finally, the western side (v. 34) will also measure ten miles (v. 34a) with its gates named Gad, Asher, and Naphtali (v. 34b). The total measurement of the city will be ten miles square (v. 35a), and Jerusalem's name will be changed to *Jehovah Shammah*, which means *Jehovah is there* (v. 35b). Since the Messianic God-Man will personally reign from this particular city, the city will not only fulfill its name of Jerusalem (the city of peace), but also *Jehovah Shammah* (Jehovah is there). For this same reason the city will also be called *Jehovah our Righteousness*, according to Jeremiah 33:16.

While Ezekiel gives only a short description of the Millennial Jerusalem, other characteristics of the Millennial Jerusalem are to be found in other parts of Scripture. The Psalms in particular took delight in describing and characterizing the Millennial Jerusalem. One such passage is Psalm 48. Verses 1-3 describe it as the residence of the God of Israel:

> *Great is Jehovah, and greatly to be praised, In the city of our God, in his holy mountain. Beautiful in elevation, the joy of the whole earth, Is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, The city of the great King. God has made himself known in her palaces for a refuge.*

In verse 8, it is God Who will establish the city:

As we have heard, so have we seen In the city of Jehovah of hosts, in the city of God: God will establish it for ever.

Because God will dwell in and judge from Jerusalem, the city is to rejoice in verse 11:

Let mount Zion be glad, Let the daughters of Judah rejoice, Because of your judgments.

Finally, the inhabitants are encouraged to study the beauty that will characterize the city in that future day, in verses 12-13:

Walk about Zion, and go round about her; Number the towers thereof; Mark ye well her bulwarks; consider her palaces: That ye may tell it to the generation following.

Because it is God Who will establish Jerusalem, Jerusalem will be known as the City of God, according to Psalm 87:1-7:

His foundation is in the holy mountains. Jehovah loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Glorious things are spoken of you, O city of God. I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon as among them that know me: Behold, Philistia, and Tyre, with Ethiopia: This one was born there. Yea, of Zion it shall be said, This one and that one was born in her; And the Most High himself will establish her. Jehovah will count, when he writes up the peoples, This one was born there. They that sing as well as they that dance shall say, All my fountains are in you.

The peace that will characterize the Millennial Jerusalem as a result of the reestablishment of the Davidic Throne is described in Psalm 122:1-9:

I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go unto the house of Jehovah. Our feet are standing Within your gates, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that are builded As a city that is compact together; Whither the tribes go up, even the tribes of Jehovah, For an ordinance for Israel, To give thanks unto the name of Jehovah. For there are set thrones for judgment, The thrones of the house of David. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: They shall prosper that love you. Peace be within your walls, And prosperity within your palaces.

> *For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace be within you. For the sake of the house of Jehovah our God I will seek your good.*

The building up of Jerusalem at the time of the regathering of Israel is the point of Psalm 147:2-3:

> *Jehovah does build up Jerusalem; He gathered together the outcasts of Israel. He heals the broken in heart, And binds up their wounds.*

Since it is God Who is rebuilding Jerusalem, it will be characterized by strength as well as peace, in Psalm 147:12-14:

> *Praise Jehovah, O Jerusalem; Praise your God, O Zion. For he has strengthened the bars of your gates; He has blessed your children within you. He makes peace in your borders; He fills you with the finest of the wheat.*

It is from this city that the Kingdom Law will emanate, according to Psalm 147:15:

> *He sends out his commandment upon earth; His word runs very swiftly.*

The emanation of the Kingdom Law is also described in Psalm 147:19-20:

> *He shows his word unto Jacob, His statutes and his ordinances unto Israel. He has not dealt so with any nation: And as for his ordinances, they have not known them. Praise ye Jehovah.*

A number of the prophets of Israel also revealed other features and characteristics of the Millennial Jerusalem. Among the Major Prophets is Isaiah, who, in 1:26-27, described the Millennial Jerusalem as being characterized by holiness, justice, and righteousness:

> *And I will restore your judges as at the first, and your counsellors as at the beginning: afterward you shall be called The city of righteousness, a faithful town. Zion shall be redeemed with justice, and her converts with righteousness.*

Later, in Isaiah 4:3-6, there is the following description:

> *And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remains in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem; when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof, by the spirit of justice, and by the spirit of burning. And Jehovah will create over the whole habitation of mount Zion, and over her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for over all the glory shall be spread a covering. And there shall be a pavilion for a shade in the daytime from the heat, and for a refuge and for a covert from storm and from rain.*

Holiness is what is going to characterize the establishment of Jerusalem (v. 3), for all of Jerusalem's previous sins will be purged by God's justice and refining fire (v. 4). Hence, over the entire Mount Zion will be the visible form of the *Shechinah* Glory (vv. 5-6).[12]

In Isaiah 14:32, Jerusalem will serve as the place of security for the afflicted people:

> *What then shall one answer the messengers of the nation? That Jehovah has founded Zion, and in her shall the afflicted of his people take refuge.*

Later, Isaiah 33:20-24 describes the Millennial Jerusalem as follows:

> *Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: your eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tent that shall not be removed, the stakes whereof shall never be plucked up, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there Jehovah will be with us in majesty, a place of broad rivers and streams, wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. For Jehovah is our judge, Jehovah is our lawgiver, Jehovah is our king; he will save us. Your tacklings are loosed; they could not strengthen the foot of their mast, they could not spread the sail: then was the prey of a great spoil divided; the lame took the prey. And*

[12] For more details see Appendix IV, The *Shechinah* Glory in History and Prophecy.

> *the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity.*

Quietness and security will characterize Jerusalem in that day (v. 20), for Jehovah in the Person of the Messiah will dwell in this city (v. 21a). It will be a city of many streams and waters, but without any ships of war ever sailing in them (v. 21b). The Messiah in the midst of the city will serve as the Judge, Lawgiver, King, and Savior (v. 22), and so Israel's sins will be totally forgiven (vv. 23-24).

The holiness and freedom of Jerusalem is emphasized in Isaiah 52:1-2:

> *Awake, awake, put on your strength, O Zion; put on your beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into you the uncircumcised and the unclean. Shake yourself from the dust; arise, sit on your throne, O Jerusalem: loose yourself from the bonds of your neck, O captive daughter of Zion.*

Jerusalem in that day will become the Holy City, and nothing unholy will ever enter into it (v. 1). It will be further characterized by freedom, for the Times of the Gentiles will be no more, and never again will Jerusalem be subject to bondage (v. 2).

In Isaiah 52:7-10, there is good news that is to be declared to Jerusalem:

> *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that brings good tidings, that publishes peace, that brings good tidings of good, that publishes salvation, that says unto Zion, Your God reigns! The voice of your watchmen! they lift up the voice, together do they sing; for they shall see eye to eye, when Jehovah returns to Zion. Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem; for Jehovah has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem. Jehovah has made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.*

The good news for Jerusalem is that Messiah will reign in Zion (v. 7), and the Jews will be regathered to Jerusalem (v. 8). Jerusalem will be built all over again, for God will redeem the city (v. 9) and salvation will characterize it (v. 10).

Jerusalem is to become the center of worldwide Gentile attention, according to Isaiah 60:10-14:

> *And foreigners shall build up your walls, and their kings shall minister unto you: for in my wrath I smote you, but in my favor have I had mercy on you. Your gates also shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto you the wealth of the nations, and their kings led captive. For that nation and kingdom that will not serve you shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted. The glory of Lebanon shall come unto you, the fir-tree, the pine, and the box-tree together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious. And the sons of them that afflicted you shall come bending unto you; and all they that despised you shall bow themselves down at the soles of your feet; and they shall call you The city of Jehovah, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel.*

The Gentiles, who will be the servants of Israel, will also be used in building up the Millennial Jerusalem (v. 10). The twelve gates named after the twelve sons of Jacob will be continually open, never to be closed throughout the Kingdom (v. 11a).[13] The Gentile nations and kings will bring their tribute through these gates (v. 11b), for failure to do so will bring swift judgment (v. 12). The Gentile nations who in the past afflicted the City of Jerusalem will now bow in submission to its authority (vv. 13-14).

A rather detailed description is in Isaiah 62:1-12:

> *For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, and her salvation as a lamp that burns. And the nations shall see your righteousness, and all kings your glory; and you shall be called by a new name, which the mouth of Jehovah shall name. You shall also be a crown of beauty in the hand of Jehovah, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God. You shall no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall your land any more be termed Desolate: but you shall be called Hephzi-bah, and your land Beulah; for*

[13] See page 481 for the graphic depicting the gates.

> *Jehovah delighted in you, and your land shall be married. For as a young man marries a virgin, so shall your sons marry you; and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you. I have set watchmen upon your walls, O Jerusalem; they shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that are Jehovah's remembrancers, take ye no rest, and give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth. Jehovah has sworn by his right hand, and by the arm of his strength, Surely I will no more give your grain to be food for your enemies; and foreigners shall not drink your new wine, for which you have labored: but they that have garnered it shall eat it, and praise Jehovah; and they that have gathered it shall drink it in the courts of my sanctuary. Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up an ensign for the peoples. Behold, Jehovah has proclaimed unto the end of the earth, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, your salvation comes; behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. And they shall call them The holy people, The redeemed of Jehovah: and you shall be called Sought out, A city not forsaken.*

The Millennial Jerusalem will be characterized by brightness and righteousness (v. 1). Her righteousness will be recognized by all the nations of the earth (v. 2a). At that time Jerusalem will be given a new name (v. 2b), the one mentioned in Ezekiel 48:35: *Jehovah Shammah*. Jerusalem will be further characterized by beauty (v. 3), never again to be forsaken or desolated by God (v. 4a), for the city itself will be God's joy and delight (vv. 4b-5). To make sure that these promises will some day be fulfilled, angelic messengers have been placed upon the walls of Jerusalem whose entire ministry consists of reminding God of His promises to make Jerusalem the joy and praise of the whole earth (vv. 6-7). The inhabitants of Millennial Jerusalem are promised that they will enjoy the fruit of their labors, for the results of their labor will never again be taken away by their enemies (vv. 8-9). The declaration is made that the redemption and salvation of Jerusalem is assured, because God is One Who keeps His promises (vv. 10-12).

Joy and rejoicing will be prominent characteristics of the Millennial Jerusalem in Isaiah 65:18-19:

> *But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create; for, behold I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people; and there shall be heard in her no more the voice of weeping and the voice of crying.*

Peace and comfort along with joy are features of the city, in Isaiah 66:10-14:

> *Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad for her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn over her; that ye may suck and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory. For thus says Jehovah, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the nations like an overflowing stream: and ye shall suck thereof; ye shall be born upon the side, and shall be dandled upon the knees. As one whom his mother comforts, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem. And ye shall see it, and your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like the tender grass: and the hand of Jehovah shall be known toward his servants; and he will have indignation against his enemies.*

Though Isaiah is the primary Major Prophet describing the Millennial Jerusalem, other Major Prophets spoke of it as well. In Jeremiah 3:17 the reestablished Davidic Throne will be situated in Jerusalem, making it the center of Gentile attention:

> *At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of Jehovah; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of Jehovah, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the stubbornness of their evil heart.*

It will also be a center of Jewish attraction, in Jeremiah 31:6:

> *For there shall be a day, that the watchmen upon the hills of Ephraim shall cry, Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion unto Jehovah our God.*

The increased size of Jerusalem, its holiness and its indestructibility are the points of Jeremiah 31:38-40:

> *Behold, the days come, says Jehovah, that the city shall be built to Jehovah from the tower of Hananel unto the gate of the corner. And the measuring line shall go out further straight onward unto the hill Gareb, and shall turn about unto Goah. And the whole valley of the dead bodies and of the ashes, and all the fields unto the brook Kidron, unto the corner of the horse gate toward the east, shall be holy unto Jehovah; it shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down any more for ever.*

The peace and joy that will return to Jerusalem is described in Jeremiah 33:9-11:

> *And this city shall be to me for a name of joy, for a praise and for a glory, before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear all the good that I do unto them, and shall fear and tremble for all the good and for all the peace that I procure unto it. Thus says Jehovah: Yet again there shall be heard in this place, whereof ye say, It is waste, without man and without beast, even in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, that are desolate, without man and without inhabitant and without beast, the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the voice of them that say, Give thanks to Jehovah of hosts, for Jehovah is good, for his lovingkindness endures for ever; and of them that bring sacrifices of thanksgiving into the house of Jehovah. For I will cause the captivity of the land to return as at the first, says Jehovah.*

The joy, peace and glory of Jerusalem will attract the Gentile nations from afar (v. 9). All the former desolations of Jerusalem will be forever forgotten (v. 10), for the streets of Jerusalem will bustle with the noise of joy and gladness, and with the happy voices of brides and bridegrooms (v. 11).

Scattered among the Minor Prophets are more references describing the Millennial Jerusalem. Jerusalem is to be characterized by holiness and security only because God Himself will dwell in her, according to Joel 3:17:

> *So shall ye know that I am Jehovah your God, dwelling in Zion my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more.*

It is from Jerusalem that God will reign over the regathered Israel, in Micah 4:6-8:

> *In that day, says Jehovah, will I assemble that which is lame, and I will gather that which is driven away, and that which I have afflicted; and I will make that which was lame a remnant, and that which was cast far off a strong nation: and Jehovah will reign over them in mount Zion from henceforth even for ever. And you, O tower of the flock, the hill of the daughter of Zion, unto you shall it come, yea, the former dominion shall come, the kingdom of the daughter of Jerusalem.*

In Zephaniah 3:14-17, the following description is given:

> *Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. Jehovah has taken away your judgments, he has cast out your enemy: the King of Israel, even Jehovah, is in the midst of you; you shall not fear evil any more. In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear you not; O Zion, let not your hands be slack. Jehovah your God is in the midst of you, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with joy; he will rest in his love; he will joy over you with singing.*

Jerusalem is to shout for joy and gladness (v. 14), for the city will be redeemed (v. 15a). God Himself will dwell in the city (vv. 15b-17) and reign over the inhabitants of the city.

Of all the Minor Prophets, Zechariah had the most to say concerning the Millennial Jerusalem. In the very first chapter of his book, in Zechariah 1:14-17, the prophet reported a promise God made that He has every intention of choosing Jerusalem in spite of desolations afflicted on her by the Gentiles:

> *So the angel that talked with me said unto me, Cry you, saying, Thus says Jehovah of hosts: I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy. And I am very sore displeased with the nations that are at ease; for I was but a little displeased, and they helped forward the affliction. Therefore thus says Jehovah: I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies; my house shall be built in it, says Jehovah of hosts, and a line shall be stretched forth over Jerusalem. Cry*

> *yet again, saying, Thus says Jehovah of hosts: My cities shall yet overflow with prosperity; and Jehovah shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem.*

Then, in Zechariah 2:1-5, he stated:

> *And I lifted up my eyes, and saw, and, behold, a man with a measuring line in his hand. Then said I, Whither go you? And he said unto me, To measure Jerusalem, to see what is the breadth thereof, and what is the length thereof. And, behold, the angel that talked with me went forth, and another angel went out to meet him, and said unto him, Run, speak to this young man, saying, Jerusalem shall be inhabited as villages without walls, by reason of the multitude of men and cattle therein. For I, says Jehovah, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and I will be the glory in the midst of her.*

This passage is an elaboration of the promise made in Zechariah 1:14-17, in which God promised that He will choose Jerusalem and rebuild her. Now, in Zechariah 2:1-5, the promise is developed. Jerusalem will indeed be rebuilt to a size far greater than ever before (vv. 1-2). The rebuilt city is portrayed as a city without walls (vv. 3-4). It does not state that there will be no walls, as if to contradict other passages studied in this chapter. It simply says *as* without walls. The purpose of walled cities was for protection and security. However, the Millennial Jerusalem will not need a wall for the purpose of protection or security, since the Messiah Himself will dwell in her midst. The purpose of Jerusalem's wall will not be for protection, but for beauty. The reason the wall will not be needed for security is because on one hand God will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem, while on the other hand the *Shechinah* Glory[14] in the form of fire will surround the city (v. 5).

The point is restated in Zechariah 2:10-12:

> *Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion; for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of you, says Jehovah. And many nations shall join themselves to Jehovah in that day, and shall be my people; and I will dwell in the midst of you, and you shall know that Jehovah of hosts has sent me unto you. And*

[14] See Appendix IV, The *Shechinah* Glory in History and Prophecy.

> *Jehovah shall inherit Judah as his portion in the holy land, and shall yet choose Jerusalem.*

God, in the Person of the Messiah, will indeed dwell in Jerusalem (v. 10). For this reason, Jerusalem will be the center of worldwide Gentile attention (v. 11). From His throne in Jerusalem, the Messiah will reign over all Israel and the Holy Land (v. 12).

Another graphic description of the Millennial Jerusalem is in Zechariah 8:1-8:

> *And the word of Jehovah of hosts came to me, saying, Thus says Jehovah of hosts: I am jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I am jealous for her with great wrath. Thus says Jehovah: I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called The city of truth; and the mountain of Jehovah of hosts, The holy mountain. Thus says Jehovah of hosts: There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, every man with his staff in his hand for very age. And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof. Thus says Jehovah of hosts: If it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in those days, should it also be marvellous in my eyes? says Jehovah of hosts. Thus says Jehovah of hosts: Behold, I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country; and I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness.*

God's special jealousy for Jerusalem (vv. 1-2) will cause Him to return to Jerusalem to dwell in her midst (v. 3a). At that time Jerusalem will become the city of truth upon the Mountain of Jehovah's House (v. 3b). The city will be inhabited by the very young and the very old (vv. 4-5). The very young will be those who will be born in the Kingdom, while the very old will indeed be very old, for many will be several hundred years of age in the closing centuries of the Millennium. The Millennial Jerusalem will be a marvelous work that only God can do (v. 6). Once the Millennial Jerusalem is established, it will be inhabited by the Jews regathered from all over the world (vv. 7-8).

Jerusalem becoming the center of worldwide Gentile attention is the

point of Zechariah 8:20-22:

> *Thus says Jehovah of hosts: It shall yet come to pass, that there shall come peoples, and the inhabitants of many cities; and the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to entreat the favor of Jehovah, and to seek Jehovah of hosts: I will go also. Yea, many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek Jehovah of hosts in Jerusalem, and to entreat the favor of Jehovah.*

The unique situation of Jerusalem in the Kingdom is described in Zechariah 14:9-11:

> *And Jehovah shall be King over all the earth: in that day shall Jehovah be one, and his name one. All the land shall be made like the Arabah, from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem; and she shall be lifted up, and shall dwell in her place, from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananel unto the king's winepresses. And men shall dwell therein, and there shall be no more curses; but Jerusalem shall dwell safely.*

The Messiah will be King in the city (v. 9), and the geography of the Land will be greatly altered so that Jerusalem can be enlarged and exalted on the Mountain of Jehovah's House (v. 10). Only then will Jerusalem become truly the city of peace and live in total security (v. 11).

Finally, the holiness that will characterize Jerusalem will extend to the very bells upon the horses, and to the pots and pans in the kitchens, according to Zechariah 14:20-21:

> *In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses,* ***Holy Unto Jehovah****; and the pots in Jehovah's house shall be like the bowls before the altar. Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holy unto Jehovah of hosts; and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and boil therein: and in that day there shall be no more a Canaanite in the house of Jehovah of hosts.*

The golden age of Jerusalem is yet to come.

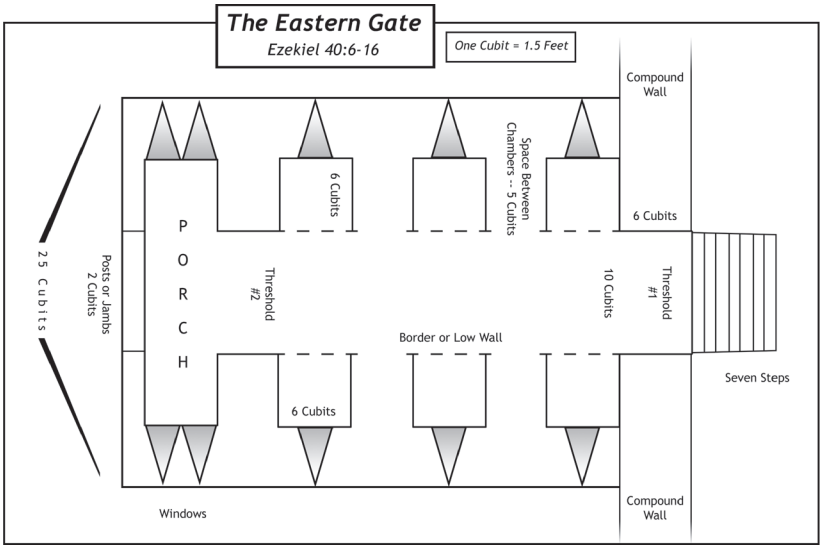


Chart #11

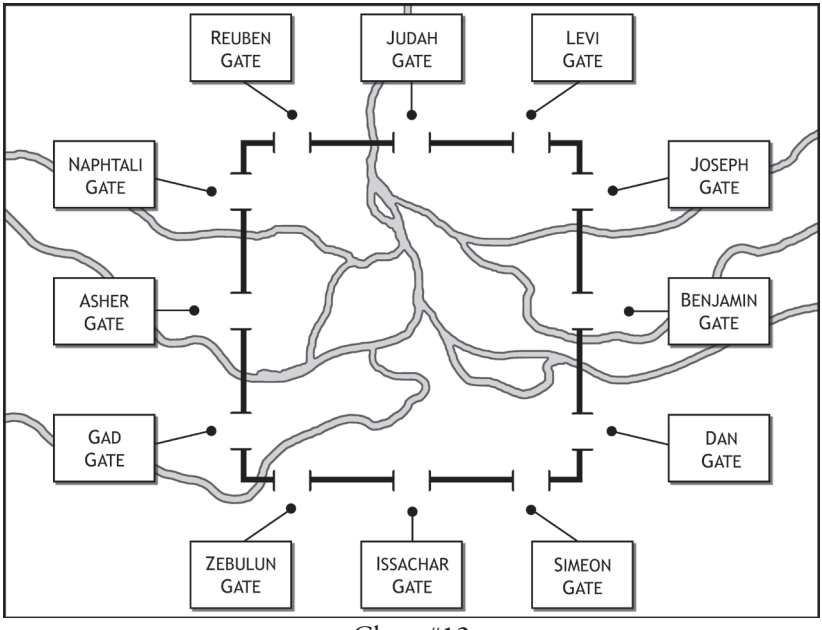


Chart #12

The Temple Compound

(Ezekiel 40:6-47; 41:2-21; 42:1-14; 43:13-27; 46:19-24; 47:1-12)

♦ ♦ ♦

1. **The Holy Place** *(Ezekiel 41:2, 21)*
2. **The Holy of Holies** *(Ezekiel 41:4)*
3. **East Outer Gate** *(with seven steps – Ezekiel 40:6-16)*
4. **The Outer Court** *(measuring 100 cubits in width – Ezekiel 40:6-27)*
5. **Chambers of the Outer Court** *(Ezekiel 40:17-19; 41:5-11)*
6. **The Pavement** *(Ezekiel 40:18)*
7. **East Inner Gate** *(with eight steps – Ezekiel 40:32-34)*
8. **North Outer Gate** *(Ezekiel 40:20-23)*
9. **The South Outer Gate** *(Ezekiel 40:24-27)*
10. **The South Inner Gate** *(Ezekiel 40:28-31)*
11. **The Inner Court** *(measuring 100 by 100 cubits – Ezekiel 40:28-46)*
12. **North Inner Gate** *(Ezekiel 40:35-37)*
13. **Chambers for Singers** *(Ezekiel 40:44-46)*
14. **Slaughter Tables for Sacrifices** *(Ezekiel 40:38-43)*
15. **The Altar** *(Ezekiel 40:47; 43:13-27)*
16. **The Temple** *(Ezekiel 41:1-4)*
17. **The Separate Place** *(Ezekiel 41:12-14)*
18. **The Building of the Separate Place** *(Ezekiel 41:12-15)*
19. **Priest's Chambers** *(50 cubits in width – Ezekiel 42:1-14)*
20. **The Priest's Kitchen** *(Ezekiel 46:19-20)*
21. **The People's Kitchen** *(Ezekiel 46:21-24)*
22. **The Millennial River** *(Ezekiel 47:1-12)*

♦ ♦ ♦

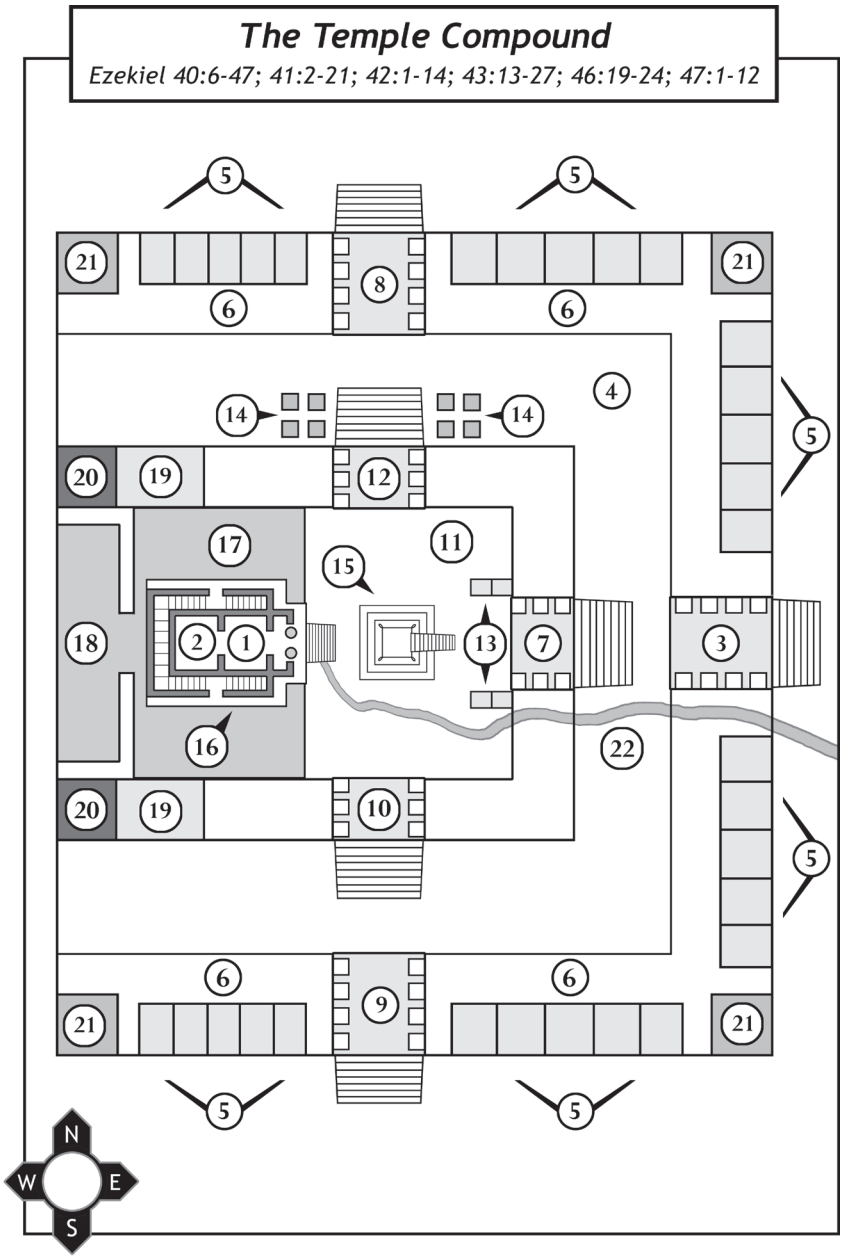

The Temple Compound
Ezekiel 40:6-47; 41:2-21; 42:1-14; 43:13-27; 46:19-24; 47:1-12
5
5
21
8
21
6
6
4
14
14
5
20
19
12
17
11
15
18
2
1
13
7
3
16
22
20
19
10
5
6
6
21
9
21
5
5
N
W
E
S

Chart #13

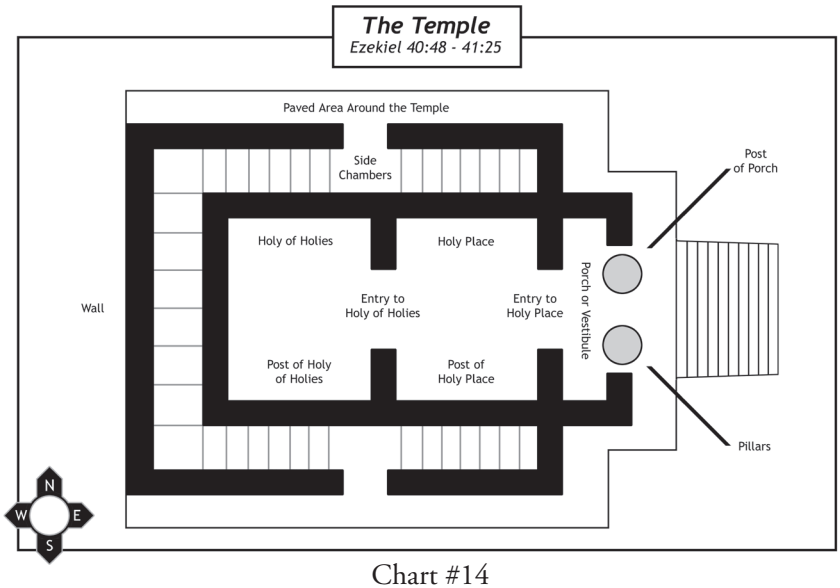


Chart #14

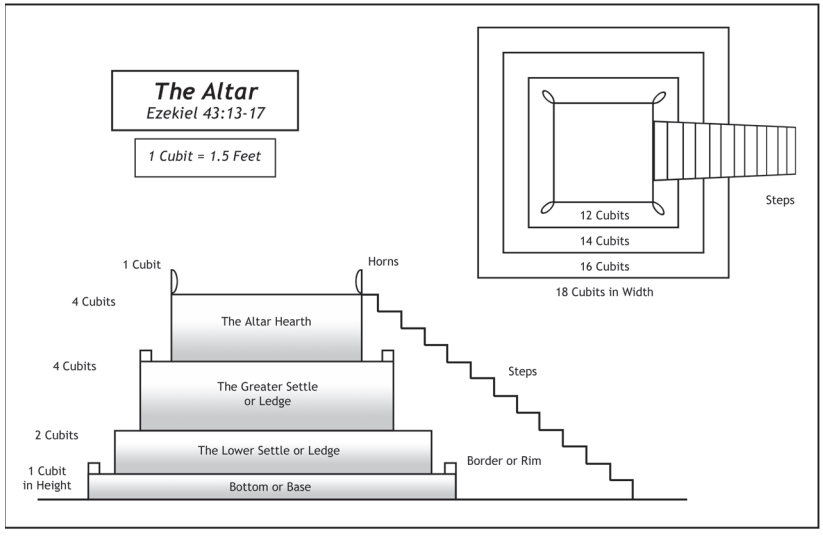


Chart #15

TWENTY

The Gentiles in the Messianic Kingdom

A. General Characteristics

The Gentiles who survive the Judgment of the Gentiles for their treatment of Israel are the ones who will enter and populate the Gentile nations in the Millennium. These are the sheep Gentiles who, because of their faith shown by their pro-Semitism, will be able to participate in and populate the Kingdom.

Much has already been said about the place of the Gentiles in the Kingdom in the previous chapters relating to the government, the Church, and Israel in the Kingdom. This chapter will be concerned with those passages that deal exclusively with the place of the Gentiles in the Kingdom, as a good number of passages in the Major and Minor Prophets speak to this point.

Of the Major Prophets, Isaiah is the key. In Isaiah 11:10, the Messiah will be the center of Gentile attraction:

> *And it shall come to pass in that day, that the root of Jesse, that stands for an ensign of the peoples, unto him shall the nations seek; and his resting-place shall be glorious.*

According to Isaiah 14:1-2, they will be possessed and be the servants of the people of Israel:

> *For Jehovah will have compassion on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and the sojourner shall join himself with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob. And the peoples shall take them, and bring them to their place; and the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of Jehovah for servants and for handmaids: and they shall take them captive whose captives they were; and they shall rule*

over their oppressors.

While on one hand the Gentiles will be subject to the King Messiah, they will also receive justice from the King in Isaiah 42:1:

> *Behold, my servant, whom I uphold; my chosen, in whom my soul delights: I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the Gentiles.*

At that time, in a special way, the Messiah will become the light to the Gentiles, according to Isaiah 49:5-7:

> *And now says Jehovah that formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob again to him, and that Israel be gathered unto him, (for I am honorable in the eyes of Jehovah, and my God is become my strength;) yea, he says, it is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give you for a light to the Gentiles, that you may be my salvation unto the end of the earth. Thus says Jehovah, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despises, to him whom the nation abhors, to a servant of rulers: Kings shall see and arise; princes, and they shall worship; because of Jehovah that is faithful, even the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you.*

The calling of the Messiah is not only on behalf of Israel to regather the scattered nation (v. 5a), but also to be the light and the salvation to the Gentiles (v. 6b). So at the time of the final restoration of Israel, the Messiah will be manifested in the most complete sense as the light to the Gentiles, and all the kings of the Gentiles will worship Him (v. 7).

A more extensive passage is Isaiah 56:1-8:

> *Thus says Jehovah, Keep ye justice, and do righteousness; for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed. Blessed is the man that does this, and the son of man that holds it fast; that keeps the sabbath from profaning it, and keeps his hand from doing any evil. Neither let the foreigner, that has joined himself to Jehovah, speak, saying, Jehovah will surely separate me from his people; neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree. For thus says Jehovah of the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and hold fast my covenant: Unto them will*

> *I give in my house and within my walls a memorial and a name better than of sons and of daughters; I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off. Also the foreigners that join themselves to Jehovah, to minister unto him, and to love the name of Jehovah, to be his servants, every one that keeps the sabbath from profaning it, and holds fast my covenant; even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon my altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples. The Lord Jehovah, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, says, Yet will I gather others to him, besides his own that are gathered.*

At the time of the setting up of the Kingdom, there may be some feeling among the sheep Gentiles that, because of the exalted position of Israel, the Gentiles will be excluded from receiving the benefits of Millennial Temple worship (vv. 1-3). But this will not be the case, for the Temple ministry will be open to all Gentiles who are rightly related to the King. Under no circumstances will they be excluded either because they are Gentiles or because they are mutilated (vv. 4-5). It is then and only then that the House of God will be called truly a house of prayer for all nations (vv. 6-7). When will that be? At the time of Israel's final regathering (v. 8).

That the Gentiles are to have a place in the Millennial Temple worship is also taught in Isaiah 66:18-24:

> *For I know their works and their thoughts: the time comes, that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come, and shall see my glory. And I will set a sign among them, and I will send such as escape of them unto the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal and Javan, to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the nations. And they shall bring all your brethren out of all the nations for an oblation unto Jehovah, upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon dromedaries, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, says Jehovah, as the children of Israel bring their oblation in a clean vessel into the house of Jehovah. And of them also will I take for priests and for Levites, says Jehovah. For as the new heavens and the*

> *new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, says Jehovah, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, says Jehovah. And they shall go forth, and look upon the dead bodies of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.*

The *Shechinah* Glory, which will be especially manifested in the Kingdom, will be seen by many of the Gentiles (v. 18), and those who do see it will set off to travel among the Gentiles who have not seen it to tell them of it (v. 19). At the same time, Gentiles will be used to conduct the Jews back into the Land of Israel (v. 20a), and they will be brought to the Mountain of Jehovah's House in order to worship (v. 20b). Furthermore, from among these Gentiles, God will choose some to serve as priests in the Temple (v. 21). Not only is Israel the eternal nation, but the faithful among the Gentiles will also be eternal (v. 22), and they will have a place of worship in the Temple for the Sabbath and new moon offerings (v. 23). As for the unfaithful among the Gentiles, their dead bodies and the suffering of their souls will be visible throughout the Kingdom (v. 24), illustrating for one thousand years God's grace to the faithful and His severity to the lost.

Besides these general characteristics, there are some specific elements that need to be dealt with.

B. The Obligation to Observe the Feast of Tabernacles

Of the various feasts and celebrations and festival offerings of the Millennium mentioned by Ezekiel, there is one feast, the Feast of Tabernacles, that will be obligatory for all Gentile nations. This is declared in Zechariah 14:16-19:

> *And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations that came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, Jehovah of hosts,*

> *and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be, that whoso of all the families of the earth goes not up unto Jerusalem to worship the King, Jehovah of hosts, upon them there shall be no rain. And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, neither shall it be upon them; there shall be the plague wherewith Jehovah will smite the nations that go not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all the nations that go not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.*

All the Gentile nations that will populate the Kingdom will be obligated to send a delegation to Jerusalem in order to worship the King at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles (v. 16). It may be at this time that the Gentiles will pay their obligatory tribute to the King (Is. 60:11). Though the Gentile observation of the Feast of Tabernacles will be mandatory, not every nation will necessarily be willing to obey. Therefore, if at any time a nation should fail to send a delegation, the rains will be withheld from them for that year (v. 17). As an example of the punishment, Zechariah mentions the case of Egypt (vv. 18-19). Should Egypt fail to send a delegation, there will be no rain for Egypt. Using Egypt as an illustration of a reluctant nation to keep the Feast of Tabernacles is especially significant, for originally the Feast of Tabernacles was inaugurated as part of a memorial festival of the deliverance of Israel from the Egyptian Bondage. But regardless of what nation may fail to obey this mandate, the punishment will be the same for all.

C. *The Arab States*

Another specific area the Scriptures deal with is the Arab states. The key charge the prophets bring against the various Arab states is their perpetual hatred of Israel. This hatred which was to characterize the descendants of Ishmael and Esau began as early as Numbers 20:14-21, and has continued throughout the biblical period and into modern history. A passage that summarizes this entire attitude is Psalm 83:1-8:

> *O God, keep not your silence: Hold not your peace, and be not still, O God. For, lo, thine enemies make a*

> *tumult; And they that hate you have lifted up the head. They take crafty counsel against your people, And consult together against your hidden ones. They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; That the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance. For they have consulted together with one consent; Against you do they make a covenant: The tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites; Moab, and the Hagarenes; Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek; Philistia with the inhabitants of Tyre: Assyria also is joined with them; They have helped the children of Lot.*

The psalmist begins by describing a united conspiracy against Israel (vv. 1-3). They are a tumultuous and crafty people who unite together against the Jews. Their aim is the total annihilation of Israel so that the very name *Israel* will no longer be remembered (v. 4). It is no coincidence that Nasser, the former dictator of Egypt, repeated this verse almost word for word just prior to the Six Day War. The various nations consult together in a covenant relationship (v. 5), and they come together to carry out the program of the previous verse: the total destruction and annihilation of Israel. Then, in verses 6-8, the various nations are listed. These names are ancient ones, but they cover the territory of the modern Arab states, which have different names. The following list shows what area they are comparable to today:

Edom	Southern Jordan
Ishmaelites	Ishmael was one of the fathers of all the Arabs
Moab	Central Jordan
Hagarenes	Egypt
Gebal	Lebanon
Ammon	Northern Jordan
Amalek	The Sinai Peninsula
Philistia	The Gaza Strip
Tyre	Lebanon
Assyria	Primarily Iraq and parts of Syria

While such a conspiracy of the Arab nations has been present since 1948, and was evident more so during and after the Six Day War, it is to have

its full force in the Great Tribulation.

Two other prophets pointed out the perpetual hatred against Israel, especially by Edom or modern southern Jordan. One prophet is Ezekiel, who stated in 35:1-5:

> *Moreover the word of Jehovah came unto me, saying, Son of man, set your face against mount Seir, and prophesy against it, and say unto it, Thus says the Lord Jehovah: Behold, I am against you, O mount Seir, and I will stretch out my hand against you, and I will make you a desolation and an astonishment. I will lay your cities waste, and you shall be desolate; and you shall know that I am Jehovah. Because you have had a perpetual enmity, and have given over the children of Israel to the power of the sword in the time of their calamity, in the time of the iniquity of the end.*

Mount Seir is the long mountain range that overlooks Israel from the land of Edom where the descendants of Esau settled. Now Ezekiel prophesies of a judgment of God that will result in making Edom a desolation (vv. 1-4) because of Edom's perpetual hatred against Israel even to the point that they were willing to turn Jewish escapees over to the Babylonians, although Edom was also subjugated by Babylon.

The small Book of Obadiah, comprised of only one chapter, also speaks of this hatred against Israel in Obadiah 10-14:

> *For the violence done to your brother Jacob, shame shall cover you, and you shall be cut off for ever. In the day that you stood on the other side, in the day that strangers carried away his substance, and foreigners entered into his gates, and cast lots upon Jerusalem, even you were as one of them. But look not you on the day of your brother in the day of his disaster, and rejoice not over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction; neither speak proudly in the day of distress. Enter not into the gate of my people in the day of their calamity; yea, look not you on their affliction in the day of their calamity, neither lay ye hands on their substance in the day of their calamity. And stand you not in the crossway, to cut off those of his that escape; and deliver not up those of his that remain in the day of distress.*

The sins of Edom described in this passage speak of another time preceding the Babylonian destruction when the Edomites committed very similar sins to those they were to commit under Babylon. Once again, the reason for Edom's actions is the perpetual enmity toward the Jews.

In determining the place of the Arab states in the Kingdom, it should be viewed from the backdrop of the Arabs' perpetual hatred against the Jews. Two principles will be used to determine the future of the individual Arab states: *first* is the history of their anti-Semitism; *second* is how closely these individual Arab states are related by blood to Israel. Ultimately, peace will come between Israel and the various Arab states, but it will come in one of three forms: *First*, by means of occupation; *second*, by means of destruction; or *third*, by means of conversion. It is necessary to deal with the various Arab states individually to get a clearer picture.

1. Lebanon

Peace will come between Israel and Lebanon by means of occupation. This is not so much explicitly stated by Scripture as it is derived from certain facts contained in the Scriptures. As stated in the previous chapter, Ezekiel 47:13-48:29 gives the boundaries of the nation of Israel in the Messianic Kingdom. The tracing of the northern boundary will show that Israel will encompass all of modern-day Lebanon. From this fact, it can be deduced that in the Kingdom, Israel will occupy and possess all of Lebanon, and it will be settled by some of the northern Jewish tribes. Lebanon was always part of the Promised Land, but it was the part that Israel never possessed. In the Messianic Kingdom, there will be no nation called Lebanon, but it will be part of Millennial Israel. Peace will come between Israel and Lebanon by means of occupation.

2. Jordan

Modern Jordan comprises the ancient countries of Edom, Moab and Ammon. Since God does not have the same future for each individual segment of Jordan, they will need to be studied individually.

a. Edom : Southern Jordan

It is Edom, or southern Jordan in particular, that the prophets were concerned about. Several passages disclose that peace will come between Israel and southern Jordan by means of destruction. One such passage is Ezekiel 35:6-9:

> *Therefore, as I live, says the Lord Jehovah, I will prepare you unto blood, and blood shall pursue you: since you have not hated blood, therefore blood shall pursue you. Thus will I make mount Seir an astonishment and a desolation; and I will cut off from it him that passes through and him that returns. And I will fill its mountains with its slain: in your hills and in your valleys and in all your watercourses shall they fall that are slain with the sword. I will make you a perpetual desolation, and your cities shall not be inhabited; and ye shall know that I am Jehovah.*

The picture is one of massive destruction, with blood and dead bodies filling the mountains, hills, and valleys (vv. 6-8), resulting in Edom's becoming a perpetual desolation (v. 9).

Adding to all this, Jeremiah 49:7-13 states:

> *Of Edom. Thus says Jehovah of hosts: Is wisdom no more in Teman? is counsel perished from the prudent? is their wisdom vanished? Flee ye, turn back, dwell in the depths, O inhabitants of Dedan; for I will bring the calamity of Esau upon him, the time that I shall visit him. If grape-gatherers came to you, would they not leave some gleaning grapes? if thieves by night, would they not destroy till they had enough? But I have made Esau bare, I have uncovered his secret places, and he shall not be able to hide himself: his seed is destroyed, and his brethren, and his neighbors; and he is not. Leave your fatherless children, I will preserve them alive; and let your widows trust in me. For thus says Jehovah: Behold, they to whom it pertained not to drink of the cup shall assuredly drink; and are you he that shall altogether go unpunished? you shall not go unpunished, but you shall surely drink. For I have sworn by myself, says Jehovah, that Bozrah shall become an astonishment, a reproach, a waste, and a curse; and all the cities thereof shall be*

perpetual wastes.

The emphasis of Jeremiah is on the totality of the destruction of the land of Edom so as to leave nothing remaining of the seed of Esau (vv. 7-10). Edom had been given an opportunity to trust in the Lord but failed to respond (v. 11). So now the cup of iniquity is full, and Edom must drink of the cup of God's wrath (v. 12), resulting in the land of Edom becoming nothing but an astonishment, a reproach, a waste, and a curse (v. 13). To all this, Jeremiah later adds, in Jeremiah 49:19-20:

> *Behold, he shall come up like a lion from the pride of the Jordan against the strong habitation: for I will suddenly make them run away from it; and whoso is chosen, him will I appoint over it: for who is like me? and who will appoint me a time? and who is the shepherd that will stand before me? Therefore hear ye the counsel of Jehovah, that he has taken against Edom; and his purposes, that he has purposed against the inhabitants of Teman: Surely they shall drag them away, even the little ones of the flock; surely he shall make their habitation desolate over them.*

Once again, there is emphasis on the totality of the destruction, with the addition that this final desolation and destruction of Edom will come by means of a war and an armed military conflict.

The smallest book of the Old Testament, Obadiah, centers its entire attention on Edom's destruction. Verses 5-9 read:

> *If thieves came to you, if robbers by night, (how are you cut off!) would they not steal only till they had enough? if grape-gatherers came to you, would they not leave some gleaning grapes? How are the things of Esau searched! how are his hidden treasures sought out! All the men of your confederacy have brought you on your way, even to the border: the men that were at peace with you have deceived you, and prevailed against you; they that eat your bread lay a snare under you: there is no understanding in him. Shall I not in that day, says Jehovah, destroy the wise men out of Edom, and understanding out of the mount of Esau? And your mighty men, O Teman, shall be dismayed, to the end that every one may be cut off from the mount of*

Esau by slaughter.

Obadiah also emphasized the totality of the destruction (vv. 5-6), pointing out their failure to be aided either by their friends (v. 7) or by their own wisdom or military might (vv. 8-9).

Later, in verses 17-21, Obadiah adds:

> *But in mount Zion there shall be those that escape, and it shall be holy; and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions. And the house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau for stubble, and they shall burn among them, and devour them; and there shall not be any remaining to the house of Esau; for Jehovah has spoken it. And they of the South shall possess the mount of Esau, and they of the lowland the Philistines; and they shall possess the field of Ephraim, and the field of Samaria; and Benjamin shall possess Gilead. And the captives of this host of the children of Israel, that are among the Canaanites, shall possess even unto Zarephath; and the captives of Jerusalem, that are in Sepharad, shall possess the cities of the South. And saviors shall come up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau; and the kingdom shall be Jehovah's.*

The time of Israel's final restoration (v. 17) will also be the time of Edom's final destruction. Obadiah states rather clearly that this destruction of Edom will come by means of the children of Israel (v. 18), for the two houses of Israel will be like fire, while Edom will be like stubble that quickly catches fire when exposed to the flame. The destruction will be total, so that nothing will remain of Esau's descendants, while the descendants of brother Jacob will own and possess the mountains of Edom (vv. 19-20). It is out of Mount Zion that judgment will fall on Edom (v. 21).

The fact that Israel will be used to bring about the final destruction of Edom is further portrayed in Ezekiel 25:12-14:

> *Thus says the Lord Jehovah: Because that Edom has dealt against the house of Judah by taking vengeance, and has greatly offended, and revenged himself upon them; therefore thus says the Lord Jehovah, I will stretch out my hand upon Edom, and will cut off man and beast from it; and I will*

> *make it desolate from Teman; even unto Dedan shall they fall by the sword. And I will lay my vengeance upon Edom by the hand of my people Israel; and they shall do in Edom according to my anger and according to my wrath; and they shall know my vengeance, says the Lord Jehovah.*

After declaring the sin of Edom, that of taking vengeance against the people of Israel (v. 12), the prophet states that God will now stretch out His hand in judgment against Edom in order to destroy everything in it. Again, the totality of the destruction is pointed out (v. 13), which will be by means of the people of Israel in armed military conflict (v. 14).

So Edom, or present-day southern Jordan, is to suffer desolation, and the destruction of all descendants of Esau will come by means of the people of Israel. Only via total destruction will peace come between Israel and southern Jordan. As with Lebanon, there will not be a nation called Edom in the Messianic Kingdom.

b. Moab: Central Jordan

As for Moab, present-day central Jordan, it, too, will suffer destruction (Jer. 48:1-46), but it will not be total. Those who survive will come to repentance and a remnant of Moab will return, according to Jeremiah 48:47:

> *Yet will I bring back the captivity of Moab in the latter days, says Jehovah. Thus far is the judgment of Moab.*

Peace will come between Israel and central Jordan by means of a partial destruction that will lead to a national salvation of Moab. Thus, there will be a saved nation called Moab in the Messianic Kingdom.

c. Ammon: Northern Jordan

Concerning Ammon, or modern northern Jordan, it will also suffer a partial destruction and become a possession of Israel, in Jeremiah 49:1-2:

> *Of the children of Ammon. Thus says Jehovah: Has Israel no sons? has he no heir? why then does Malcam possess Gad, and his people dwell in the cities thereof? Therefore, behold, the days come, says Jehovah, that I will cause an alarm of*

> *war to be heard against Rabbah of the children of Ammon; and it shall become a desolate heap, and her daughters shall be burned with fire: then shall Israel possess them that did possess him, says Jehovah.*

As with Moab, it will not be a total destruction and those who survive will turn to the Lord for a remnant of Ammon will also be found in the Kingdom, according to Jeremiah 49:6:

> *But afterward I will bring back the captivity of the children of Ammon, says Jehovah.*

Thus, peace comes between Israel and northern Jordan by means of a partial destruction, followed by conversion, and there will be a saved nation called Ammon in the Kingdom.

To summarize, peace will come between Israel and the three parts of Jordan by means of destruction, but not all to the same degree. In the case of Edom or southern Jordan, the destruction will be total, and there will not be a nation of Edom in the Kingdom. The Edomites are descendants of Esau, the twin brother of Jacob, and so Israel and Edom were the closest blood relationship. In the cases of Moab or central Jordan and Ammon or northern Jordan, the destruction will be partial. There will be a Moab and an Ammon in the Kingdom, with both subservient to Israel. Both these nations are descendants of Lot, the nephew of Abraham and, thus, more distantly related by blood.

3. Egypt

Peace will come between Israel and Egypt initially by means of destruction and later by means of conversion. A comprehensive story of Egypt's future is given in Isaiah 19:1-22. In verses 1-10, the Prophet Isaiah described the punishment of Egypt because of her sins. Egypt will be characterized by civil war, desolation, and famine. In verses 11-15, the prophet stated that the root cause of Egypt's devastation is her leaders who have led Egypt astray. Under the dictatorships of Farouk, Nasser and Sadat, Egypt went to war against Israel on four occasions, resulting in heavy losses for Egypt and wrecking its economy. Out of all this, there developed a fear in Egypt of Israel, as prophesied in Isaiah 19:16-17:

> *In that day shall the Egyptians be like unto women; and they shall tremble and fear because of the shaking of the hand of Jehovah of hosts, which he shakes over them. And the land of Judah shall become a terror unto Egypt; every one to whom mention is made thereof shall be afraid, because of the purpose of Jehovah of hosts, which he purposes against it.*

Never in ancient history has this been true; Egyptian forces passed through the Land of Israel freely, even in the days of Solomon. Only since 1948, and especially since the Six Day War, have the Egyptian forces evidenced the fear portrayed in this passage. There has been a fear and dread in Egypt of Israel ever since that time. With Egypt's having lost four wars against Israel with heavy casualties, the fear is deeply rooted. Prophetically, today is still the period of Isaiah 19:16-17.

But eventually peace will come between Israel and Egypt. Initially, the peace is a political one, when the Hebrew language will be spoken in Egypt by five cities, according to Isaiah 19:18:

> *In that day there shall be five cities in the land of Egypt that speak the language of Canaan, and swear to Jehovah of hosts; one shall be called The city of destruction.*

In Isaiah's day, the *language of Canaan* was the Hebrew language. Exactly how this prophecy will be fulfilled remains to be seen.

This in turn will slowly give way to Egypt's conversion, in Isaiah 19:19-22:

> *In that day shall there be an altar to Jehovah in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to Jehovah. And it shall be for a sign and for a witness unto Jehovah of hosts in the land of Egypt; for they shall cry unto Jehovah because of oppressors, and he will send them a savior, and a defender, and he will deliver them. And Jehovah shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know Jehovah in that day; yea, they shall worship with sacrifice and oblation, and shall vow a vow unto Jehovah, and shall perform it. And Jehovah will smite Egypt, smiting and healing; and they shall return unto Jehovah, and he will be entreated of them, and will heal them.*

An altar to the God of Israel will be built as a sign and a witness of the power of the God of Israel to save the land of Egypt (vv. 19-20a). Egypt will be greatly oppressed by the forces of the Antichrist and his cohorts (Dan. 11:42-43), but God will save Egypt from the domination of those oppressors (v. 20b). The Egyptians will realize that Allah, the Moslem god, cannot save them, but only Jehovah, the God of Israel. This will lead to a national conversion of Egypt. Egypt will know the Lord and will worship the God of Israel with oblations, sacrifices, and vows (v. 21). The same God Who brought about their destruction will also bring about their regeneration and their healing when they turn in faith to Him (v. 22).

In conjunction with the latter days of the Tribulation and the Campaign of Armageddon, there will be the national conversion of Egypt. In this manner, they will take their place in the ranks of the sheep Gentiles. It should be noted that Egypt will be one of the nations that will move against the Antichrist in Daniel 11:40.

Nevertheless, because of Egypt's longstanding hatred of Israel, in the outworking of the cursing principle of the Abrahamic Covenant, Egypt will suffer a desolation that will be similar to that of Edom, according to Joel 3:19:

> *Egypt shall be a desolation, and Edom shall be a desolate wilderness, for the violence done to the children of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood in their land.*

The sin of Egypt is the same as that of Edom: mistreatment of the Jews, and so punishment will come. With Edom, it will be total and permanent (desolation and wilderness). But with Egypt, it will be total yet temporary (desolation but not a wilderness). In fact, the desolation of Egypt is to last only for the first forty years of the Kingdom, as recorded in Ezekiel 29:1-16:

> *In the tenth year, in the tenth month, in the twelfth day of the month, the word of Jehovah came unto me, saying, Son of man, set your face against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and prophesy against him, and against all Egypt; speak, and say, Thus says the Lord Jehovah: Behold, I am against you, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great monster that lies in the midst of his rivers, that has said, My river is my own, and I have made it for myself. And I will put hooks*

in your jaws, and I will cause the fish of your rivers to stick unto your scales; and I will bring you up out of the midst of your rivers, with all the fish of your rivers which stick unto your scales. And I will cast you forth into the wilderness, you and all the fish of your rivers: you shall fall upon the open field; you shall not be brought together, nor gathered; I have given you for food to the beasts of the earth and to the birds of the heavens. And all the inhabitants of Egypt shall know that I am Jehovah, because they have been a staff of reed to the house of Israel. When they took hold of you by your hand, you did break, and did rend all their shoulders; and when they leaned upon you, you broke, and made all their loins to be at a stand. Therefore thus says the Lord Jehovah: Behold, I will bring a sword upon you, and will cut off from you man and beast. And the land of Egypt shall be a desolation and a waste; and they shall know that I am Jehovah. Because he has said, The river is mine, and I have made it; therefore, behold, I am against you; and against your rivers, and I will make the land of Egypt an utter waste and desolation, from the tower of Seveneh even unto the border of Ethiopia. No foot of man shall pass through it, nor foot of beast shall pass through it, neither shall it be inhabited forty years. And I will make the land of Egypt a desolation in the midst of the countries that are desolate; and her cities among the cities that are laid waste shall be a desolation forty years; and I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and will disperse them through the countries. For thus says the Lord Jehovah: At the end of forty years will I gather the Egyptians from the peoples whither they were scattered; and I will bring back the captivity of Egypt, and will cause them to return into the land of Pathros, into the land of their birth; and they shall be there a base kingdom. It shall be the basest of the kingdoms; neither shall it any more lift itself up above the nations: and I will diminish them, that they shall no more rule over the nations. And it shall be no more the confidence of the house of Israel, bringing iniquity to remembrance, when they turn to look after them: and they shall know that I am the Lord Jehovah.

Ezekiel is commanded to prophesy against Egypt (vv. 1-2) and predict the coming dispersion of the Egyptians from their land (vv. 3-5) because of their long history of mistreatment of Israel (vv. 6-7). The land of Egypt will suffer a period of total desolation (vv. 8-10), which will last for forty years (vv. 11-12a), and the Egyptians will be scattered all over the world like Israel was before her (v. 12b). But after the end of the period of forty years, the Egyptians will be regathered (v. 13) and brought back into their land (v. 14). Though Egypt will become a kingdom again, it will never be a powerful one (v. 15). Nor will Israel ever again be guilty of placing her confidence in Egypt (v. 16), but will trust in the Lord their God. As for the lowly kingdom of Egypt, it will also be required to observe the Feast of Tabernacles (Zech. 14:16-19).

In summary, peace will come between Israel and Egypt by means of conversion. Only when the Egyptians worship the same God as Israel, through Jesus the Messiah, will peace finally come. For the first forty years of the Kingdom, the land of Egypt will be desolate and the Egyptians will be dispersed all over the world. But afterwards, the Egyptians will be regathered, becoming a kingdom again.

4. Assyria: Northern Iraq

Ancient Assyria is today comprised of modern northern Iraq, another implacable Arab enemy of modern Israel. But peace will come between Israel and northern Iraq by means of conversion, according to Isaiah 19:23-25:

> *In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria; and the Egyptians shall worship with the Assyrians. In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth; for that Jehovah of hosts has blessed them, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel my inheritance.*

Verse 23 describes an economic unit that will encompass Egypt, Israel and Assyria. The famous highway of the ancient world known as the *via maris* has ceased to function ever since 1948, when Israel became a state. In 1948 Egypt and Syria closed their borders, making the high-

way inoperable. However, in the Kingdom, when peace will be restored, all borders will be open, and the highway, a symbol of economy, will be restored between these Middle Eastern states. The means by which this will occur is conversion (vv. 24-25). Not only will Egypt undergo a conversion experience, but so will the ancient area of Assyria. Assyria will become a blessing in the earth and will receive a blessing from God. The three former enemies will now have a spiritual unity as well as an economic and political one. God declares Egypt will be *my people*, Assyria *the work of my hands*, and Israel *my inheritance*. This spiritual unity will be the basis for the other unities.

So peace will come between Israel and Assyria (northern Iraq) by means of conversion. When this happens, there will be economic, political, and religious unity, because they will all worship the same God.

5. Kedar and Hazor: Saudi Arabia

Peace will come between Israel and Saudi Arabia by means of destruction. This is taught in Jeremiah 49:28-33. The passage describes the total devastation of Saudi Arabia by war until the inhabitants are scattered and dispersed all over the world. As for the land itself, Jeremiah 49:33 states:

> *And Hazor shall be a dwelling-place of jackals, a desolation for ever: no man shall dwell there, neither shall any son of man sojourn therein.*

The land of Saudi Arabia will be a perpetual desolation throughout the Kingdom, and the residents will be dispersed everywhere. While Egypt's desolation and dispersion will only last forty years, for Saudi Arabia it will last for all of the one thousand years.

So peace will come between Israel and Saudi Arabia via destruction.

6. Elam: Persia or Iran

Although Persia or Iran (ancient Elam) is not an Arab state but a Persian one, its future will be examined here because it shares the same religion (Islam) with the Moslem Arabs.

Peace will come between Israel and Iran by means of destruction, according to Jeremiah 49:34-39. In verses 34-38, Jeremiah described the destruction of Elam, with the inhabitants being completely dispersed all

over the world. But then verse 39 declares:

> *But it shall come to pass in the latter days, that I will bring back the captivity of Elam, says Jehovah.*

The destruction of Iran will be partial, and the dispersion will be temporary. Eventually the inhabitants will return and resettle Iran. The future of Iran is similar to that of Egypt, but the length of time they will be in dispersion is not revealed.

So peace will come between Israel and Iran via destruction, dispersion, and then a conversion and a return. There will be a saved nation of Elam (Persia or Iran) in the Kingdom.

D. The Two Desolate Spots of the Kingdom

As has been shown in previous chapters, during the Messianic Kingdom the entire world will be fruitful and very productive; the whole earth will be characterized by beauty. Nevertheless, there will be two desolate spots of burning pitch and burning brimstone throughout the period of the Kingdom: Babylon and Edom. (Egypt will be desolate only in the sense of non-habitation, and that for only forty years, Saudi Arabia will be desolate throughout the Kingdom, but also only in the sense of non-habitation).

1. Babylon: Southern Iraq

The first of these two desolate spots will be the former world capital of the Antichrist: Babylon. Several passages make this point, one of which is Isaiah 13:20-22:

> *It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall shepherds make their flocks to lie down there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and ostriches shall dwell there, and wild goats shall dance there. And wolves shall cry in their castles, and jackals in the pleasant palaces: and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged.*

The uninhabitable ruins are described as similar to Sodom and Gomorrah in Jeremiah 50:39-40:

> *Therefore the wild beasts of the desert with the wolves shall dwell there, and the ostriches shall dwell therein: and it shall be no more inhabited for ever; neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation. As when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbor cities thereof, says Jehovah, so shall no man dwell there, neither shall any son of man sojourn therein.*

Later, Jeremiah emphasized the totality and completeness of Babylon's desolation in Jeremiah 51:41-43:

> *How is Sheshach taken! and the praise of the whole earth seized! how is Babylon become a desolation among the nations! The sea is come up upon Babylon; she is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof. Her cities are become a desolation, a dry land, and a desert, a land wherein no man dwells, neither does any son of man pass thereby.*

Throughout the Kingdom period, no man will even so much as pass by the ruins of Babylon, something that is hardly true today.

Not only is Babylon to be a desolate waste throughout the Kingdom, it will also be a place of continual burning and smoke throughout the Millennium, according to Revelation 19:3:

> *And a second time they say, Hallelujah. And her smoke goes up for ever and ever.*

It is obvious that the animal inhabitants, as we know them, mentioned in Isaiah 13:20-22 and Jeremiah 50:39-40, cannot live in a place of continual burning pitch and brimstone and so they cannot be literal animals. What they actually are is explained by Revelation 18:1-2:

> *After these things I saw another angel coming down out of heaven, having great authority; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried with a mighty voice, saying, Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, and is become a habitation of demons, and a hold of every unclean spirit, and a hold of every unclean and hateful bird.*

This place of continual burning and smoke will be a place of con-

finement for many demons during the Kingdom period. It is clear from Revelation nine and other passages that demons have animal-like features, and this is what the animals of the Isaiah and Jeremiah passages actually represent. In fact, the Hebrew word translated as *wild goats* refers to demons in goat form.

2. Edom: Southern Jordan

The second desolate spot in the Kingdom will be Edom. This is also pointed out by several of the prophets, such as Isaiah 34:8-15:

> *For Jehovah has a day of vengeance, a year of recompense for the cause of Zion. And the streams of Edom shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch. It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up for ever; from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever. But the pelican and the porcupine shall possess it; and the owl and the raven shall dwell therein: and he will stretch over it the line of confusion, and the plummet of emptiness. They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none shall be there; and all its princes shall be nothing. And thorns shall come up in its palaces, nettles and thistles in the fortresses thereof; and it shall be a habitation of jackals, a court for ostriches. And the wild beasts of the desert shall meet with the wolves, and the wild goat shall cry to his fellow; yea, the night-monster shall settle there, and shall find her a place to rest. There shall the dart-snake make her nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather under her shade; yea, there shall the kites be gathered, every one with her mate.*

The reason for Edom's becoming a perpetual desolation is their sins against Israel (v. 8). Like Babylon, it is to become a place of continual burning and smoke (vv. 9-10), inhabited by various foul birds and animals, and characterized by confusion (v. 11). It will be totally uninhabited by men (v. 12) and will be habitable only by the animals mentioned (vv. 13-15). Yet these animals as we know them cannot live in a place of burning pitch and burning brimstone. Two clues in this text show that these are not literal

birds and animals. Again, the word translated *wild goats* actually means "demons in goat form." The word translated *night-monster* means "night demons." Like Babylon, Edom will also be an abode of demons.

Another prophecy, in Jeremiah 49:17-18, states:

> *And Edom shall become an astonishment: every one that passes by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss at all the plagues thereof. As in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbor cities thereof, says Jehovah, no man shall dwell there, neither shall any son of man sojourn therein.*

The emphasis is on the totality, for no human will inhabit the land of Edom or even pass through it. Like Babylon, the desolation will be similar to that of Sodom and Gomorrah.

The reason for such massive destruction in Edom is amplified by Ezekiel 35:10-15:

> *Because you have said, These two nations and these two countries shall be mine, and we will possess it; whereas Jehovah was there: therefore, as I live, says the Lord Jehovah, I will do according to your anger, and according to your envy which you have showed out of your hatred against them; and I will make myself known among them, when I shall judge you. And you shall know that I, Jehovah, have heard all your revilings which you have spoken against the mountains of Israel, saying, They are laid desolate, they are given us to devour. And ye have magnified yourselves against me with your mouth, and have multiplied your words against me: I have heard it. Thus says the Lord Jehovah: When the whole earth rejoices, I will make you desolate. As you did rejoice over the inheritance of the house of Israel, because it was desolate, so will I do unto you: you shall be desolate, O mount Seir, and all Edom, even all of it; and they shall know that I am Jehovah.*

Because of Edom's glee over the fall of Israel and Judah, the punishment must come (vv. 10-13). So while the whole earth is beautified and rejoicing, Edom will be a desolation (v. 14). The calamities, which fell on Israel and over which Edom rejoiced, will now fall on Edom in a more severe way (v. 15).

Finally, Joel 3:19 states:

> *Egypt shall be a desolation, and Edom shall be a desolate wilderness, for the violence done to the children of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood in their land.*

Egypt's desolation will be limited to only forty years. As for Edom, because of her unique violence against Israel, her desolation will be permanent and last throughout the Kingdom.

Throughout the Millennial Kingdom, while the whole earth is beautified and blossoming as the rose, the two areas of Babylon and Edom will be places of continual burning pitch and burning brimstone. The smoke will rise and be visible for the entire one thousand years. While Satan will be confined in the Abyss, his demons will be confined in Babylon and Edom. These two places will be the abode of demons for the entire Kingdom period.

Part VI

The Aftermath

TWENTY-ONE

The Aftermath

During the time of the Millennium, the most ideal conditions will exist on the earth—the best since the Fall. But it will not be a perfect situation. Sin and death, though greatly reduced, will not be eliminated, and a great number of unregenerate men will be alive at the time of the close of the Messianic Kingdom, all born during the last century of the Millennium. It is after one thousand years of ideal conditions and environment that the Messianic Kingdom ends with one last test for man.

A. The Loosing of Satan and the Final Invasion of Israel

The Millennium will end when Satan is released from his fifth abode.[1] This event is described in Revelation 20:7-10:

> *And when the thousand years are finished, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall come forth to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to the war: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up over the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and the fire came down out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where are also the beast and the false prophet; and they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.*

[1] See Appendix I, The Six Abodes of Satan.

When the full one thousand years are completed, Satan will be released out of his confinement in the Abyss (v. 7) and will again do the work of deception among all the nations of the Gentiles in the earth (v. 8). By this time, a great number of unbelievers will exist, all of whom will be under one hundred years of age. The expression *Gog and Magog* points to the extent of the work of deception reaching the extremities of the earth and hints at a similarity with the invasion described in Ezekiel 38:1-39:16, which will occur prior to the Great Tribulation. The similarity is that this, too, will be an invasion of Israel. The work of deception will be massive, and a worldwide revolt will begin to form. Eventually, a worldwide invasion of the Millennial Israel will take place, and the Millennial Jerusalem will be surrounded by these deceived Gentile armies. But once these armies arrive at the Mountain of Jehovah's House, the invading forces will be quickly dispensed with by fire out of Heaven, destroying them massively and suddenly (v. 9). At this point, the instigator of this revolt will be placed into his sixth and final abode: the Lake of Fire (v. 10). This will be both his final and eternal abode—a place of torment for all eternity. He will now join the Antichrist and the False Prophet, who entered it one thousand years previously. The career of Satan will then come to an end.

With this final revolt, the Millennial Kingdom will come to an end, and there will be a transfer of authority as described in I Corinthians 15:24-28:

> *Then comes the end, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have abolished all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be abolished is death. For, He put all things in subjection under his feet. But when he says, All things are put in subjection, it is evident that he is excepted who did subject all things unto him. And when all things have been subjected unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subjected to him that did subject all things unto him, that God may be all in all.*

Ultimately, the power and the authority of the Kingdom must be turned over to God the Father. But this can only occur after every enemy of man is abolished and there is no longer any challenge to God's rule, authority, and power (v. 24). For this very reason, the Messiah must rule

until every single enemy of man has been placed under subjection (v. 25). The last of the enemies of man is not Satan, but death itself (v. 26). It should be remembered that death will still exist in the Kingdom. It is only after Satan's final revolt and his confinement in the Lake of Fire that death can be abolished. It is Satan who caused death for man by tempting the first parents. It is only when the originator of death for man is forever confined in his final abode that death can be abolished. And at this point, it will be. With this, the Millennial Kingdom will come to an end. All things will now have been placed in total subjection to the Messiah, and that totality of subjection will now be subjugated to God the Father in order that God may be all in all (vv. 27-28).

B. The Great White Throne Judgment

The Great White Throne Judgment, described in Revelation 20:11-12, will come after the end of the Millennium and in preparation for the establishment of the Eternal Order:

> *And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat upon it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne; and books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works.*

This prophecy begins with a vision of one sitting on the Great White Throne (v. 11a). Although the throne-sitter is not named, in all probability it is Jesus the Messiah, for it is to Him that all judgment has been given (Jn. 5:22). A passing away of the old order will occur at the time of the Great White Throne Judgment. The present heavens and earth, in existence since Genesis one, will be done away with (v. 11b). That which was renovated for the Millennium, but polluted all over again with man's last revolt, will now be done away with forever.

This will leave all things ready for the judgment itself (v. 12). The judgment will be a judgment of all unbelievers of all time. The purpose of this judgment will not be to determine whether or not a person is saved, for

that has been settled forever one way or the other at death. The purpose of this judgment will be to determine the degree of punishment. There is a principle in Scripture that does teach degrees of punishment based upon degrees of sinfulness and upon greater or lesser light or knowledge and the response or lack of it to that light. In Matthew 11:20-24, Jesus spoke of things being more tolerable for some than for others in the day of judgment:

> *Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not. Woe unto you, Chorazin! woe unto you, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon which were done in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment, than for you. And you, Capernaum, shall you be exalted unto heaven? you shall go down unto Hades: for if the mighty works had been done in Sodom which were done in you, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for you.*

Elsewhere, in Luke 12:47-48, Jesus spoke of few stripes and many stripes:

> *And that servant, who knew his lord's will, and made not ready, nor did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes; but he that knew not, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. And to whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required: and to whom they commit much, of him will they ask the more.*

In John 19:11, Jesus spoke of greater and lesser sins:

> *Jesus answered him, You would have no power against me, except it were given you from above: therefore he that delivered me unto you has greater sin.*

One's appearance at this particular judgment will be a direct result of failing to believe on Jesus as Savior. However, the degree of punishment will be on the basis of one's works. In determining the degrees of punish-

ment, *books* are mentioned in addition to the Book of Life. A threefold distinction should be made between the Book of Life, the Lamb's Book of Life, and the other books mentioned in verse 12.

The *Book of Life* contains the names of every person who was ever born, according to Psalm 139:16:

> *Your eyes did see my unformed substance; And in your book they were all written, Even the days that were ordained for me, When as yet there was none of them.*

Those who believe have their names retained in the Book of Life, according to Revelation 3:5:

> *He that overcomes shall thus be arrayed in white garments; and I will in no wise blot his name out of the book of life, and I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.*

However, in Psalm 69:28, the unsaved have their names blotted out of the Book of Life:

> *Let them be blotted out of the book of life, And not be written with the righteous.*

So then, at the Great White Throne Judgment, if their names are not found in the Book of Life, it will show them to be unsaved and worthy of partaking in this particular judgment.

It is at that point that the *other books* mentioned in verse 12 are used. These other books contain accounts of one's deeds and responses. It is on the basis of what is written in these books that the degrees of punishments will be determined.

Another book mentioned in the Scriptures that should be kept distinct is the *Lamb's Book of Life*. This book contains the names of every individual who is born again and only those who are born again. Their names were written into this book before the earth was ever created, according to Revelation 13:8:

> *And all that dwell on the earth shall worship him, every one whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb that has been slain.*

It is mentioned again in Revelation 17:8b:

> *And they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, they whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast, how that he was, and is not, and shall come.*

In Psalm 69:28, it is known as the Book of the Righteous:

> *Let them be blotted out of the book of life, And not be written with the righteous.*

Based on God's election and foreknowledge, this book contains the names of only those who are born again. And because salvation is eternally sure, it is impossible to be blotted out of this particular book.

C. The Second Resurrection

The second resurrection is described in Revelation 20:13:

> *And the sea gave up the dead that were in it; and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.*

Following the description of the judgment, there is the account of the second resurrection. Whereas the first resurrection will be composed of believers only, the second resurrection will be composed of unbelievers only. The two resurrections will be separated by one thousand years. Just as the first resurrection is to be in stages (Jesus the firstfruits, the Church saints, the Old Testament saints, and then the Tribulation saints), so the second resurrection will be in stages. The firstfruits of the second resurrection will be the Antichrist, and his death and resurrection have already been described.[2] One thousand years after the resurrection of the Antichrist, there will be the resurrection of all other unbelievers. The dead bodies of all unbelievers will be resurrected in order to be reunited with all the souls relinquished by Hell. They will then be judged at the Great White Throne on the basis of their works.

---

[2] See Chapter 15, The Seventy-Five Day Interval.

D. The Second Death: the Lake of Fire

Following the sentence of the Great White Throne Judgment will come the execution of it, according to Revelation 20:14-15:

> *And death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death, even the lake of fire. And if any was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire.*

The second resurrection will soon give way to the second death in the Lake of Fire, which will be the eternal abode of the lost.

Evangelistic preaching is generally centered around the necessity of believing in order to avoid spending eternity in Hell and in order to spend eternity in Heaven. Neither point is biblically true.

Throughout the pages of the Old Testament, both the righteous and unrighteous were said to go to a place called in Hebrew, *Sheol*, and in Greek, *Hades.* While the Old Testament sacrifices covered the sins of the Old Testament saints, it did not remove their sins (Heb. 10:4). Only the death of the Messiah could do that. So while the sacrificial system was sufficient to keep them from Hell, it was not able to get them into Heaven. So all who died, both the righteous and unrighteous, went to a place known as *Sheol* or *Hades*.

This place contained two compartments, and a description of the two sides of *Sheol*, or *Hades*, is found in Luke 16:19-31:

> *Now there was a certain rich man, and he was clothed in purple and fine linen, faring sumptuously every day: and a certain beggar named Lazarus was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table; yea, even the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and that he was carried away by the angels into Abraham's bosom: and the rich man also died, and was buried. And in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am in anguish in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things: but now*

> *here he is comforted, and you are in anguish. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, that they that would pass from hence to you may not be able, and that none may cross over from thence to us. And he said, I pray you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house; for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. But Abraham said, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one go to them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, if they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, if one rise from the dead.*

Sheol, or *Hades*, had two compartments. One compartment was for the unrighteous, and it could be called *Hell* in the way we use that term today; it was indeed a place of torment (vv. 23-25, 28). The other compartment where the righteous went was known as *Abraham's Bosom* (v. 22); it was a place of comfort (v. 25), but it was not Heaven. Elsewhere, the righteous portion of *Sheol*, or *Hades*, is called Paradise, as in Luke 23:43:

> *And he said unto him, Verily I say unto you, Today shall you be with me in Paradise.*

While the two sides could see each other and communicate with each other, they were separated by an immense gulf (v. 26) that made it impossible for someone on one side to cross over to the other side.

When an Old Testament saint died, his body was buried in the earth while his soul went to Abraham's Bosom, or Paradise. On the other hand, when an Old Testament sinner died, his body was also buried in the ground, but his soul went into Hell.

When Jesus died, He not only paid the price of all future sins, but He also paid the price of all previous sins (Rom. 3:25; Heb. 9:15). Thus, the sins of the Old Testament saints were removed. What happened next is described in Ephesians 4:8-10:

> *Wherefore he says, When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, And gave gifts unto men. (Now this, He ascended, what is it but that he also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.)*

While the body of Jesus remained in the tomb, His soul went down into the Paradise side of *Sheol*, or *Hades*, announcing that the atonement had been made. At the time of His ascension, all the souls of the Old Testament saints were removed out of Abraham's bosom, or Paradise, and brought into Heaven. In this way the righteous portion of *Sheol*, or *Hades*, was eliminated and is no longer in existence.

Today, when an unbeliever dies, his body is still buried in the ground and his soul still goes into Hell. However, when the believer dies, though his body is also buried in the ground, his soul goes immediately into Heaven, as Paul reveals in II Corinthians 5:8:

> *We are of good courage, I say, and are willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be at home with the Lord.*

To be in Heaven at death is to be with Jesus, according to Philippians 1:23:

> *But I am in a strait betwixt the two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ; for it is very far better.*

When the first resurrection occurs, the bodies of the believers will be resurrected and reunited with their souls. This will occur at the Rapture for the Church saints, and for the Old Testament and Tribulation saints it will occur after the Second Coming.

At the time of the second resurrection, the bodies of the unsaved will be resurrected, and the souls of Hell will be removed to be reunited with the bodies. At that time, the Hell portion of *Sheol*, or *Hades*, will also be eliminated, because Hell will not be the eternal abode of the lost: the Lake of Fire will be. Hell is a place of torment for the soul only, but the Lake of Fire will be a place of torment for both soul and body.

On the other hand, Heaven will not be the eternal abode of the believer, as the last two chapters of the Revelation reveal.

Part VII

The Eternal Order

TWENTY-TWO

The Eternal Order

While the Messianic Kingdom is the high point of Old Testament prophecy, the Eternal Order is the high point of New Testament prophecy. Whereas much of the information in the first twenty chapters of the Book of Revelation can also be found in the Old Testament, the last two chapters of Revelation contain brand-new material not revealed to the prophets of the Old Testament.

The Millennium itself is only one thousand years long. However, according to the promises of the Davidic Covenant, there was to be an eternal Dynasty, an eternal Kingdom, and an eternal Throne. The eternal existence of the Dynasty is assured because it culminates in an eternal Person: Jesus the Messiah. But the eternal existence of the Throne and Kingdom must also be assured. The millennial form of the Kingdom of God will end after one thousand years. But the Kingdom of God in the sense of God's rule will continue into the Eternal Order. Jesus will continue His position of authority on the Davidic Throne into the Eternal Order.

All that is known about the Eternal Order is to be found in Revelation 21:1-22:5, and that entire passage of Scripture is the concern of this chapter.

A. The Passing Away of the Old Order and the Creation of the Eternal Order—Revelation 21:1-8

In preparation for the Great White Throne Judgment, the older order of the heavens and the earth will be done away with. Then, following the

Great White Throne Judgment, there will be a creation of the Eternal Order, as recorded in Revelation 21:1-2:

> *And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away; and the sea is no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband.*

To replace the old order, new heavens and a new earth will be created (v. 1). A significant element missing on the new earth is the sea. The present earth was originally comprised of a mineral garden completely covered with precious stones and gems, and it served as Satan's second abode (Ezek. 28:11-16).[1] But when Satan fell, not only was Satan judged, but also the earth which was under Satan's authority. That judgment included the covering of the earth with the oceans (Gen. 1:2). The oceans are part of God's judgment of the first earth, but they will be nonexistent in the new earth. Though the new heavens and the new earth will need to be created, the New Jerusalem will not, as it already exists in the present third Heaven. When the new earth is created, the New Jerusalem will come down from Heaven in order to settle on the new earth and will be adorned with the beauty of a bride prepared for the marriage ceremony (v. 2). While the greatest details of the New Jerusalem are found in these last two chapters of the Revelation, it was mentioned earlier in the pages of the New Testament. Paul described the New Jerusalem as that which is free in Galatians 4:26:

> *But the Jerusalem that is above is free, which is our mother.*

While the Jerusalem on earth was continually under bondage and subjugated by various forces, the New Jerusalem in Heaven has been eternally free and will always remain so. It was this particular city that Abraham was seeking, according to Hebrews 11:9-10:

> *By faith he became a sojourner in the land of promise, as in a land not his own, dwelling in tents, with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: for he looked for the city which has the foundations, whose builder and*

[1] See Appendix I, The Six Abodes of Satan.

maker is God.

Then in Hebrews 12:22-24 it is described as the eternal abode of all the redeemed:

> *But ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable hosts of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better than that of Abel.*

This city will serve as the eternal abode of several groups. It will be inhabited by the entire Triune God, the entire angelic host, the Church saints and the *spirits of just men made perfect*, who are the Old Testament saints. They were *just* in their day because they were justified by their faith, but they were *made perfect* at the death of the Messiah. Not mentioned but obviously included will be the Tribulation saints and the millennial saints.

Following the vision of the creation of the Eternal Order, the first declaration from the One on the Throne is given in Revelation 21:3-4:

> *And I heard a great voice out of the throne saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his peoples, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God: and he shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain, any more: the first things are passed away.*

Two points are made in this declaration. *First*: the habitation of God will now be with men. This is a reaffirmation of Hebrews 12:22-24 that the New Jerusalem will be the eternal abode of God, angels, and redeemed humanity. The word translated *dwell* literally means "to tabernacle." It is a reference to the *Shechinah* Glory's[2] abiding with men as it once did in the Tabernacle in the wilderness. *Second*: He affirms that all the effects of the curse recorded in Genesis 3:16-19 will be removed:

[2] See Appendix IV, The History and Prophecy of the *Shechinah* Glory.

> *Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply your pain and your conception; in pain you shall bring forth children; and your desire shall be to your husband, and he shall rule over you. And unto Adam he said, Because you have hearkened unto the voice of your wife, and have eaten of the tree, of which I commanded you, saying, You shall not eat of it: cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil shall you eat of it all the days of your life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to you; and you shall eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of your face shall you eat bread, till you return unto the ground; for out of it were you taken: for dust you are, and unto dust shall you return.*

When the Fall of man came during the beginning of the old order, it caused a great number of side effects in the outworking of the Adamic curse. All these effects of the curse of the old order will be removed with the abolition of the old order. Therefore, in the Eternal Order there will be no tears, death, mourning, crying, or pain.

Then the second declaration from the Throne is given in Revelation 21:5-8:

> *And he that sits on the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said, Write: for these words are faithful and true. And he said unto me, They are come to pass. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcomes shall inherit these things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. But for the fearful, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, their part shall be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone; which is the second death.*

The second declaration from the Throne of God concerns the works of God. *First*: there is an affirmation that the future creation of the Eternal Order is assured, because the One Who makes the promise is both faithful and true (v. 5). *Second*: there is the provision of the fountain of the waters of life (v. 6). *Third*: the passage refers to the inheritance of the believers (v. 7), which is the new heavens, the new earth, and the New Jerusalem being described in these closing chapters of the Revelation. But *fourth*: there is a description of the inheritance of the unbeliever (v. 8), which is

the second death, in the Lake of Fire.

B. The Eternal New Jerusalem—Revelation 21:9-22:5

The next major section contains a description of the eternal New Jerusalem. Again it should be noted that this is all that can be known from Scriptures about what the Eternal Order is going to be like.

1. The Revelation of the Establishment of the City—Revelation 21:9-10

This section begins in Revelation 21:9-10 with an elaboration of Revelation 21:2 regarding the establishment of the New Jerusalem:

> *And there came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls, who were laden with the seven last plagues; and he spoke with me, saying, Come hither, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb. And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God.*

The announcement to John to *come up hither* again (as in 4:1) is so that God can show him more things to come. He is told that he is about to be shown more concerning the Bride of the Messiah (v. 9), namely, the eternal abode of the Bride—the New Jerusalem (v. 10) that will come down to the freshly created new earth from Heaven where it has eternally been.

2. The Description of the New Jerusalem—Revelation 21:11-22:5

After the revelation of the establishment of the city, there is a detailed description of the city in Revelation 21:11-22:5. There are eleven things that should be noted.

First: *the glory* of the New Jerusalem is revealed in Revelation 21:11:

> *Having the glory of God: her light was like unto a stone most precious, as it were a jasper stone, clear as crystal.*

The glory is that of the *Shechinah* Glory, whose final abode will be in the New Jerusalem.

Second: a description of the *city wall* is given in Revelation 21:12-13:

> *Having a wall great and high; having twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: on the east were three gates; and on the north three gates; and on the south three gates; and on the west three gates.*

The city wall emphasizes its *protection*. The wall is said to be *great and high*, but no details about its size or height are given at this point. The city will have a total of twelve gates, and each gate will be given to the authority of an angel. The twelve gates will be named after the Twelve Tribes of Israel, meaning that for all eternity these Jewish names will be remembered. Furthermore, the text states that this great wall will have four sides with three gates on each side. Thus, all the gates will be equally divided.

Third: the *foundations of the wall* are described in Revelation 21:14:

> *And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.*

The foundations emphasize *permanence*, and there will be a total number of twelve foundations named after the Twelve Apostles. These names will also be remembered for all eternity.

Fourth: the *measurements of the city* are recorded in Revelation 21:15-17:

> *And he that spoke with me had for a measure a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. And the city lies foursquare, and the length thereof is as great as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs: the length and the breadth and the height thereof are equal. And he measured the wall thereof, a hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of an angel.*

The measurements of the city emphasize its *spaciousness*. The city will be foursquare, a cube with the height, length, and breadth being equal, that is, measuring about 1,500 miles long, wide, and high. Obviously, it will

be the largest city ever known to man, with plenty of room for all the redeemed of all ages to live. As for *the wall*, it will measure 216 feet high, so it will indeed be a high wall, as stated earlier, in verse 12.

Fifth: the *composition of the city* is described in Revelation 21:18-21:

> *And the building of the wall thereof was jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto pure glass. The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the several gates was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.*

The *wall* will be built of jasper, and the entire cubed *city* will be made of transparent gold. As for the twelve *foundations* of the wall, each foundation will be composed of different precious stones with its own dominant color. They can be delineated as follows:

1. Jasper—green
2. Sapphire—blue
3. Chalcedony—greenish
4. Emerald—green
5. Sardonyx—red and white
6. Sardius—fiery red
7. Chrysolite—golden yellow
8. Beryl—aqua green
9. Topaz—greenish yellow
10. Chrysoprase—golden green
11. Jacinth—violet
12. Amethyst—purple

The original earth of Ezekiel 28:13 had a total of ten stones and half of these stones also characterized the first earth before Satan's fall in Ezekiel 28:13. The new earth will enjoy all the perfections of the first earth, plus two additional stones for a total of twelve. As for the twelve *gates* named after the Twelve Tribes of Israel, each gate will be made of a single huge pearl. The singular *street* of the city, like the city itself, will be composed of transparent gold.

Sixth: in addition to the absence of oceans in the new earth, several other *omissions* are mentioned in Revelation 21:22-24:

> *And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God the Almighty, and the Lamb, are the temple thereof. And the city has no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine upon it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the lamp thereof is the Lamb. And the nations shall walk amidst the light thereof: and the kings of the earth bring their glory into it.*

A second item missing on the new earth is a temple. During historic time, a total of four Temples will have existed. But in eternity, there will be no temple, neither will there be any need for one, since the entire Triune God will inhabit the city along with all the redeemed of all ages. The third and fourth omissions are the sun and moon. In the original creation of the first earth, there was no sun or moon either, for they were only created on the fourth day of Genesis one. However, there will be a return to that original condition, with the absence of the sun and the moon. The source of light in the Eternal Order will not come from such created things, but will be provided by the Creator of light, the *Shechinah* Glory of the Lamb, which will lighten all for the Eternal Order. The Gentiles of the earth will walk by means of this light, as well as those who served as kings in the old order. The mention of *Gentiles* shows that the Jew and Gentile distinction will be maintained for all eternity, but there is no mention of any functional difference.

Seventh: there is a description regarding the *entrance* into the city in Revelation 21:25-27:

> *And the gates thereof shall in no wise be shut by day (for there shall be no night there): and they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it: and there shall in no wise enter into it anything unclean, or he that makes an abomination and a lie: but only they that are written in the Lamb's book of life.*

Though there will be twelve pearly gates around the city maintained by twelve angels, these gates will never be closed throughout eternity. Then a fifth omission in the Eternal Order is given: the absence of night. The existence of darkness was another result of the curse on the earth at Satan's fall (Gen. 1:2). During the six days of creation,

there was only a partial removal of the darkness (the sun by day) and the night (the moon and the stars provided limited light) that existed. But in the Eternal Order, since all the effects of sin are to be removed forever, there will be no night. As for the forever-open gates of the New Jerusalem, the righteous of the Gentiles that are found in the Lamb's Book of Life will bring their glory into it. On the other hand, nothing of unrighteousness will ever be allowed to enter into the eternal city. All unrighteousness will now be confined in the Lake of Fire.

Eighth: there is a description of the *river of life* in Revelation 22:1-2a:

> *And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the midst of the street thereof.*

Out of the Throne of God and the Messiah, a river will begin to flow with the brightness of crystal. It will continue to flow throughout the singular street of the city of the New Jerusalem.

Ninth: the *tree of life* is described in Revelation 22:2b:

> *And on this side of the river and on that was the tree of life, bearing twelve manner of fruits, yielding its fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.*

The Tree of Life that existed in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 2:9; 3:22, 24) will now return. The trunk of the tree will extend to both sides of the eternal river of life and will be characterized by productivity, bearing fresh fruit each month of the year. It should be noted that the word *month* is used, so some kind of dating system will be present in the Eternal Order. Since there will be no sun, moon, or night, it will be a radically different dating system than the one in which we presently live. But there will be a dating system of some kind. The leaves of the Tree of Life are for *the healing of the nations*. The Greek word translated *healing* is the source of the modern English word "therapeutic." The purpose of the leaves is not to heal existing sicknesses, for they will not exist in the Eternal Order; rather, they will be for health-giving to the nations. There will be no sickness in the Eternal Order because of the leaves of the Tree of Life. The Greek word for *nations* is the term that means "Gentiles." This again shows that the Jewish-Gentile distinction continues though, there is no functional difference.

Tenth: there is a description of the *occupants* of the New Jerusalem in Revelation 22:3-4:

> *And there shall be no curse any more: and the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be therein: and his servants shall serve him; and they shall see his face; and his name shall be on their foreheads.*

There will be a total absence of the curse in the Eternal Order. The residents of the city will include the Lamb and all the redeemed of all ages, who will have the name of Jesus on their foreheads.

Eleventh: the presence of the *Shechinah* Glory is reiterated in Revelation 22:5:

> *And there shall be night no more; and they need no light of lamp, neither light of sun; for the Lord God shall give them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.*

Once again, the text declares that night will not exist in the Eternal Order, and there will be no need for light of the sun or the light of a lamp. God Himself will provide all the light that is necessary. As previously stated, this light will be the *Shechinah* Glory, which will provide all the light that is necessary for all eternity.

Part VIII

Conclusion

TWENTY-THREE

Conclusion

The conclusion of the Book of the Revelation, found in Revelation 22:6-21, contains several important elements.

A. The Authentication of the Book of Revelation—Revelation 22:6-9

The concluding words begin with the authentication of all that John had written in the book in Revelation 22:6-9. *First*: there is the authentication by God in Revelation 22:6-7:

> *And he said unto me, These words are faithful and true: and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which must shortly come to pass. And behold, I come quickly. Blessed is he that keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.*

God Himself, and Jesus in particular, authenticate all that John had written. The Spirit of the prophets Who inspired all previous writings of the Scripture also inspired this prophecy of the Book of the Revelation. The specific means of revelation to John was a holy angel. The Book of Revelation ends the same way it begins: with a promise of a blessing to those who keep (in the sense of watching for) the things prophesied in the book.

Second: in Revelation 22:8-9, the writing of John is authenticated by the very angel who gave John all the revelation in the first place:

> *And I John am he that heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel that showed me these things. And he said unto me, See you do it not: I am a fellow-servant with you and*

with your brethren the prophets, and with them that keep the words of this book: worship God.

B. Declarations in Light of the Revelation—Revelation 22:10-15

In light of the revelation of things to come in God's program, certain declarations are given in this final chapter of the book, in Revelation 22:10-15.

The first declaration concerns the book itself in Revelation 22:10:

And he says unto me, Seal not up the words of the prophecy of this book; for the time is at hand.

As Daniel the Prophet was closing his book, he was told to seal it in Daniel 12:4a:

But you, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: . . .

Then, again, in Daniel 12:8-9:

And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my lord, what shall be the issue of these things? And he said, Go your way, Daniel; for the words are shut up and sealed till the time of the end.

The revelation given to Daniel covered so much territory and expanded over such a long period of time that he was unable to understand much of what he wrote. Daniel was told to seal his book until the time when many of the prophecies would be explained and clarified by later revelation. With the Book of Revelation, much of the Book of Daniel has been clarified, expanded, detailed, and explained. So John, in contrast to Daniel, was told not to seal up his book, for all prophecy can now be understood and its fulfillment could begin at any time.

The second declaration is directed at the righteous and the unrighteous in Revelation 22:11:

He that is unrighteous, let him do unrighteousness still: and he that is filthy, let him be made filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him do righteousness still: and he that is holy,

let him be made holy still.

Those who are unrighteous are to confirm their unrighteousness by continuing in their unrighteousness, which is something that will naturally occur if God's revelation is rejected. But the righteous are to confirm their righteousness by continuing in their righteousness, which will naturally result if God's revelation is accepted. The former will be characterized by filthiness, but the latter by holiness.

The third declaration gives the purpose of the return of the Messiah, in Revelation 22:12:

> *Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to render to each man according as his work is.*

The purpose of the return of Jesus is to render to each man according to his works. His coming at the Rapture is to reward the saints for the works done in their bodies since salvation. The purpose of the Second Coming is to render judgment for the works of unrighteousness.

The fourth declaration emphasizes the eternalness of the Person of the Messiah in Revelation 22:13:

> *I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.*

The fifth declaration concerns the inhabitants of the New Jerusalem, in Revelation 22:14:

> *Blessed are they that wash their robes, that they may have the right to come to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gates into the city.*

The inhabitants of the New Jerusalem will be characterized by redemption. It is their redeemed state that will give them the authority to enter the city via the pearly gates and to partake of the Tree of Life.

The sixth and final declaration, in Revelation 22:15, gives the characteristics of the unredeemed who will not have the authority to enter the New Jerusalem:

> *Without are the dogs, and the sorcerers, and the fornicators, and the murderers, and the idolaters, and every one that loves and makes a lie.*

The place *without* will be the Lake of Fire.

C. The First Affirmation of Christ—Revelation 22:16

The six declarations are followed by the first affirmation of the Messiah in Revelation 22:16:

> *I Jesus have sent my angel to testify unto you these things for the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright, the morning star.*

Jesus Himself affirms that it was He Who sent the angel to John to reveal all the things found in the Book of Revelation so that John could deliver these things to the churches. It is the same Jesus Who, in His humanity, is the root and offspring of David, but as to His deity, He is the *Shechinah* Glory, as seen in the brightness and visibility of the light of the morning star.

D. The Invitation of the Holy Spirit and the Church—Revelation 22:17

The first affirmation of the Messiah is followed by an invitation given by the Holy Spirit and the Church in Revelation 22:17:

> *And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And he that hears, let him say, Come. And he that is athirst, let him come: he that will, let him take the water of life freely.*

These words contain an invitation to salvation which requires believing in Jesus as Savior. The call to salvation is a divine call by the Holy Spirit and the Church. The Holy Spirit does the work of conviction concerning the truth of the gospel, and it is He who does the work of effectual calling and regeneration. It is the Church that presents the message which the Holy Spirit uses to convict and to call. Those who respond will have the authority to partake of the waters of life in the New Jerusalem.

E. The Warnings—Revelation 22:18-19

The call to salvation is followed by two warnings in Revelation

22:18-19:

> *I testify unto every man that hears the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto them, God shall add unto him the plaques which are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, which are written in this book.*

The first warning is against any and all additions. Those who add to what is written will receive the plagues of the Book of Revelation, ultimately the Lake of Fire. The second warning is against any subtractions from this book, for those who do so will not dwell in the New Jerusalem and partake of the Tree of Life. Both those who would add and those who would subtract do so as evidence of their unsaved state.

These two warnings against additions and subtractions in their context are concerned specifically with the Book of Revelation, and the primary emphasis is not on the Bible as a whole. However, since the Book of the Revelation is the final revelation of God's Word, the principle behind the warning can be extended to the Bible as a whole, for the Bible as a whole is complete only with the Book of Revelation. Once the last Apostle died, no further inspired books would be written (Eph. 2:11-3:12).[1]

Examples of those who add are the numerous cults that accept other writings as inspired and authoritative and place them on equal grounds with the Bible (i.e., the Mormons with *The Book of Mormon* and Christian Science with their *Key to the Scriptures*). Examples of those who subtract are those who refuse to accept the entire body of Scripture as God's inspired Word and hold to concepts of partial inspiration or no inspiration. However, both those who add and those who subtract do so because they are not willing to accept the Scriptures as the final authority. This demonstrates their unsaved state. Hence, they will lose out on dwelling in the New Jerusalem, and the Lake of Fire will be their eternal abode.

[1] See Appendix VI, The Eight Mysteries of the New Testament.

F. The Second Affirmation of Christ—Revelation 22:20

The second affirmation of the Messiah is given in Revelation 22:20:

> *He who testifies these things says, Yea: I come quickly. Amen: come, Lord Jesus.*

The second affirmation testifies to the truthfulness of all that John wrote by stating that He will be returning soon to fulfill all the prophecies contained in this book. The term *quickly* applies to the return of the Messiah at the Rapture from God's perspective. God is not bound to time as we know it, and the past and future are as vivid to Him as the present. For the believer, the term emphasizes imminency, meaning He could come at any moment. Although almost two thousand years have passed since this affirmation, nevertheless, the saints are always to be ready and looking for the appearing of the Son of God.

G. The Benediction—Revelation 22:21

The book ends with the benediction found in Revelation 22:21:

> *The grace of the Lord Jesus be with the saints. Amen.*

Selah.

Appendices

APPENDIX I

The Six Abodes of Satan

That Satan has a career is something that is clearly taught in the Scriptures. However, this career is seldom actually traced from start to finish, and perhaps this can best be done in a book on eschatology. One of the better ways of tracing the career of Satan is by means of the six abodes in which he either has lived in the past (the first two), is living in the present (the third), or will live in the future (the fourth, fifth, and sixth). The first two abodes of Satan, both of which are now past, are to be found in Ezekiel 28:11-15:

> *Moreover the word of Jehovah came unto me, saying, Son of man, take up a lamentation over the king of Tyre, and say unto him, Thus says the Lord Jehovah: You seal up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering, the sardius, the topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of your tabrets and of your pipes was in you; in the day that you were created they were prepared. You were the anointed cherub that covers: and I set you, so that you were upon the holy mountain of God; you have walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. You were perfect in your ways from the day that you were created, till unrighteousness was found in you.*

The relationship of this passage with the first ten verses of the same chapter should not be ignored. In verses 1-10, Ezekiel is commanded to address a man whom he entitles *the prince of Tyre*. It is quite evident from history that the one addressed as *the prince* was really the king of Tyre, and the rest of the world considered him to be such. Yet when

God ordered Ezekiel to prophesy, He gave this king of Tyre a lesser title, that of merely a *prince*, for the real *king* was another personality entirely.

Verse 11 is the start of a new prophecy: *Moreover the word of Jehovah came unto me, saying . . .* This is Ezekiel's wording for the start of a new prophecy. There is a relationship to the previous prophecy of verses 1-10. Earlier, Ezekiel had been told to address a human king, to whom God gave a lesser title, *the prince of Tyre* (v. 2): *Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyre, thus says the Lord Jehovah*. In verses 1-10, Ezekiel has been addressing a human individual called *the prince of Tyre*. However, in verses 11-19 he is dealing with a superior being, an angelic being—Satan—and addressed him as the *king of Tyre*.

What is the connection? What is the relationship? The human prince of Tyre who sat upon the throne of Tyre was able to control the sea lane traffic of the Mediterranean by virtue of that position. Because of that control, he gained a great deal of wealth, and with that wealth came power and authority. According to verses 1-10, a day came in this man's life that as he meditated in a wrong manner upon his wealth, his power, and his authority, he was filled with pride, and this pride led to his self-declaration of deity. Verse two states:

> *Because your heart is lifted up, and you have said, I am a god, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas; yet you are man, and not God, though you did set your heart as the heart of God.*

The problem with the prince of Tyre is that a day came when he proclaimed himself to be almighty god. He was so filled with pride that he convinced himself that he was god. For this pride, which led to the self-declaration of deity, he is condemned by God through Ezekiel in verses 1-10. The world called this human being the *king* of Tyre, but God gave him a lesser title—not that of king, but that of *prince*. The real king of Tyre was not the visible person sitting on the throne, but an invisible person, Satan, who was controlling the visible one. The invisible person was the true king of Tyre, and this invisible person once fell for the same reason: the problem of pride that led to a self-declaration of deity. In verses 11-19, God gave Ezekiel a new prophecy. Ezekiel was to turn his attention away from the visible to the invisible, away from the prince of Tyre, and address the true king of Tyre. The descriptions given of this one cannot be true of a mere

human being. This new prophecy introduced by verse 11 concerns a new person: Satan.

In verse 12b is the lamentation: *Son of man, take up a lamentation over the king of Tyre, and say unto him*. The word *lamentation* means "dirge." Ezekiel was told to take up a lamentation, or a dirge, over the king of Tyre and then to declare certain specific things concerning him. It is at that point (vv. 12b-15) that Ezekiel describes the first abode.

A. The First Abode: The Throne of God

The first abode of Satan is given in verse 14 as being over *the holy mountain of God.* Whenever the word *mountain* is used symbolically, it always symbolizes a king, kingdom, or throne. It is quite well known that the Bible uses many symbols. Because of its high usage of symbols, especially in the area of prophetic studies, this has led to two basic extremes. The *first* extreme is to say that because of all these symbols, one must not delve too deeply into the study of the Scriptures because we can never really be sure what all these symbols represent. Prophecy must be seen merely as a general struggle between good and evil, God and Satan; with good, or God, winning in the end. The *second* extreme is that which begins to apply guesswork, often based on current events, and which results in speculation concerning what these symbols represent. Thus, the symbols are given a meaning that was never intended by the Scriptures.

There is a balance between the two extremes. While on one hand, it is true that the Bible uses many symbols, on the other hand, the Bible is consistent in its usage of symbols. A specific symbol will mean the same thing throughout the Old and New Testaments in about 95 percent of the cases. For example, whenever the word "stone" is used symbolically, it is always the symbol of the second Person of the Trinity, God the Son, or Jesus the Messiah. Whenever the word "mountain" is used symbolically, it is always a symbol of a king, kingdom, or throne. Both of these symbols are found coming together in a very famous prophetic passage in the Book of Daniel. In Daniel two, Nebuchadnezzar dreamed of a huge image composed of various metals which Daniel interpreted to represent "the Times of the Gentiles" when the Gentiles will have

domination over the Jewish people. In his dream, Nebuchadnezzar then saw a small *stone* that *smote the image on its feet and destroyed the image entirely* (v. 34). Daniel interpreted this to represent the Second Coming, when Jesus the Messiah will return and smash Gentile domination over the Jewish people. In the dream the *stone* began to grow and grow until it became a huge mountain that filled the entire earth (v. 35) which, Daniel said, represented the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom in which the Messiah will rule over the entire world. The Bible does use many symbols, but it is consistent in its usage of symbols.

Thus Satan's first abode, in verse 14, is described as being *upon the holy mountain of God*, meaning that he was over the Throne of God, as a canopy overshadowing the Throne of God.

This passage reveals three things about the nature of this being during the first abode.

The Hebrew word for "seal" comes from a Hebrew root that means "to weigh" or "to measure off." It is used this way in Ezekiel 43:10: *and let them measure the pattern (or the sum)*. The word means "to fill up" or "to complete" the pattern completely. This means that Satan was the one who sealed the measurements in that he was perfect in form and he filled up the sum in the two areas of wisdom and beauty. First, verse 12b states, *You seal up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty*. To *seal up the sum* is to totally fill up a pattern, measure, or blueprint. When God set out to do His creative work, He limited His work of creation to a specific pattern and did not choose to go beyond it. When animals were created, they filled up only a portion of the pattern. When man was created, he filled up some more of the pattern. Angels filled even a bit more. But when God created Satan, he filled up the entire pattern in two areas: wisdom and beauty. Of all created beings, Satan was by far the wisest and the most beautiful. This description is in sharp contrast with the many portraits of Satan painted by centuries of artists that depict Satan as an ugly creature.

Second, in verse 14, Satan was *the anointed cherub that covers*. In the celestial sphere, there are three orders or ranks of beings. The lowest rank is the angels, over whom is Michael the Archangel. Above the angels are the *seraphim*, noted for having six wings, and mentioned in Isaiah six and Revelation four. The highest rank of created beings are the *cherubim*, and Satan, in his original creation, was one among many cherubs. He was of the highest order, but one among many equals. Ezekiel one points out that the *cherubim* were the bearers or carriers of the *Shechinah* Glory, and

they are the closest to the Throne of God. While the angels are before the Throne, and the *seraphim* surround the Throne, the *cherubim* are under it and are responsible for carrying the Throne of God. The closer a being is to the Throne, the higher the being's rank. The *cherubim* are the closest to the Throne of God, and Satan is a cherub. However, at some point in eternity past, God took this one cherub and *anointed* or "messiahed" him, which made him the Arch-Cherub, and elevated him over the other cherubs in power and authority. With this event, then, Satan was the highest of all created beings, not only in wisdom and beauty, but also in power and authority. Furthermore, he was *the anointed cherub that covers*. The Hebrew for *covers* means "the covering roof." He was a canopy over the Throne of God. In chapter one of Ezekiel, while other *cherubim* were underneath the Throne and were carrying the Throne, this particular cherub was a canopy over the Throne of God. This one was the most prominent cherub of them all.

A third element regarding his nature is given in verse 15a: *You were perfect in your ways from the day that you were created*. When this being was created, he was created in absolute perfection, without a single flaw. The word *perfect* means to be created without any flaws. When God created him, he was perfect; he had no flaws whatsoever. He was perfect in all his *ways*, meaning his actions were as perfect as his being. This was true from the day he was created. This is the second time Ezekiel informs us that this is a created being, so he cannot be referring to a human being. The fact that he was created, the fact that he was the anointed cherub, rules out his being a mere human being. From the day that God created him, he was created perfect. This shows that the fault of Satan's fall or deceit did not lie with God. The fault did not lie with God because from the very day he was created, he was perfect in all his actions as well as in his being and his person. The corruption of his person and actions came subsequent to his creation, for he was so perfect that he even had the power of contrary choice, i.e., to choose contrary to his nature. This is not a freedom that man has today, for fallen man can choose only in accordance with his fallen nature. But Satan was able to choose contrary to his nature. By nature, he was a holy and perfect being, yet he had the power to make an unholy and an imperfect choice.

B. The Second Abode: The Mineral Garden of Eden

Satan's second abode is described in verse 13. Some time after the creation of angelic beings (Job 38:4-7), God created the heavens and the earth (Gen. 1:1). Different parts of the universe were given over to the authority of different angelic beings. This planet earth was given over to the authority of Satan: *You were in Eden the garden of God*. The Garden of Eden of Ezekiel 28:13 was not the same as the Garden of Eden of Genesis 2-3. The latter was a vegetable garden, but the former is described as a mineral garden. Ezekiel 28:13 describes how the entire planet looked when it was originally created. It had no oceans or seas and was covered with the brightness of the precious stones mentioned in this verse. These stones exuded light and so are called *the stones of fire* in verse 14. Satan was able to walk *up and down in the midst of the stones of fire*. The Hebrew means "to walk to and fro," and in the Hebrew text this was a very common figure used of satanic activity (Job 1:7; 2:2). It is also used of good angels and typifies angelic activity (Zech. 1:10-11; 6:7). "Walking to and fro, up and down" is typical of angelic activity, including Satan's activity. He walked up and down, to and fro, in the midst of the stones of fire. This planet, entirely in the form of a mineral Garden of Eden, served as Satan's second abode for an unknown period of time before any human being was created.

Furthermore, verse 13 states: *every precious stone was your covering*. The Hebrew word for "covering" means "canopy." In other words, these stones served as a canopy over the king of Tyre. These stones also covered the earth, according to a subsequent verse. These stones had a double purpose: *first*, they covered the king of Tyre or Satan as a canopy (v. 13); *second*, these stones were what covered the earth of Genesis 1:1, so that the king of Tyre was able to walk *up and down in the midst of the stones of fire* (v. 14). All together, ten stones are listed. They are listed as three sets of three, plus one: first, *the sardius, the topaz, and the diamond*; second, *the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper*; third, *the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle*; and finally, *and gold*. Many of these stones are the same as the stones of the breastplate of the Jewish high priest, and this is significant. The first set is the sardius, the topaz, and the diamond; this corresponds to the first row of stones which was on the breastplate

of the high priest (Ex. 28:17), with one exception: in place of the diamond was the carbuncle. The second set in verse 13 is the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, which corresponds to the fourth row of stones on the breastplate of the high priest (Ex. 28:20). The third set is the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle; this corresponds to the second row of the breastplate of the high priest (Ex. 28:18), with the exception that in place of the carbuncle was the diamond. Finally, one metal was left: the gold. These stones and their alignment are almost identical to three of the four rows of stones on the breastplate of the high priest in Exodus 28:17-20. The difference is that for the high priest, the stones were on the breastplate; for the king of Tyre, they served as a canopy. Furthermore, the high priest had twelve and not ten stones. What this may indicate is that the king of Tyre, or Satan before his fall, had specific priestly functions in Heaven: he served as a priest in Heaven. It is a fact that there is a Tabernacle in Heaven, because the earthly Tabernacle was a copy of the Tabernacle in Heaven. From these verses, it appears that Satan was the heavenly high priest. Of course, since his fall, he no longer serves in that capacity. Today, Jesus is our High Priest. But this was the situation in Heaven prior to the fall of Satan.

Then verse 13 goes on to state: *the workmanship of your tabrets and of your pipes was in you*. These words *tabrets* and *pipes* could be taken in two different ways. First, they may have referred to musical instruments, and if so, they again imply that the king of Tyre led in divine worship. If that is true, it gives further credence that he served as the heavenly high priest to lead in worship. The second way of understanding these words is "of your settings and of your sockets." If that is the meaning of these words, then they refer to the settings of the ten gems mentioned in the same verse. Normally, if a verse can be translated in two different ways, then the context determines which way to go. But in this case, the context allows for both. Because on the one hand the context spoke of priestly stones, it might indicate that these are the musical instruments that he used to lead in worship. But they are also gems and may refer to the sockets as well. It may even be a combination of both. It refers to the gems and to the significance of the gems: he led in priestly worship in Heaven.

Finally the verse states: *in the day that you were created they were prepared*. The phrase *in the day that you were created* is one of several reasons why Ezekiel could not be speaking of the literal king of Tyre,

but he is speaking of someone else. The prince of Tyre or the literal human king of Tyre was born, not created. But this being was *created*. This refers to Satan prior to his fall. *They were prepared* means that from the moment of his creation, these things were assigned to him. That which was assigned to him included those things which were spoken of: first, his perfection: he filled up the sum in wisdom and beauty; second, the canopy of stones was prepared for him; and third, the musical instruments by which he could lead in worship. On the day that he was created, he was already appointed the high priest, to function as the priest in the heavenly Tabernacle.

It was while Satan was in his second abode that the fall described in Ezekiel 28:16-17a took place:

> *By the abundance of your traffic they filled the midst of you with violence, and you have sinned: therefore have I cast you as profane out of the mountain of God; and I have destroyed you, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you have corrupted your wisdom by reason of your brightness: . . .*

The problem of the *prince* of Tyre centuries later was the problem of the *king* of Tyre centuries earlier. Looking at his wisdom, beauty, power, and authority, and meditating upon these things, ultimately led to the rise of pride (*your heart was lifted up*), and thus Satan sinned. That it was pride that led to the fall of Satan is clearly stated in I Timothy 3:6:

> *Not a novice, lest being puffed up he fall into the condemnation of the devil.*

Paul warned strongly against placing a new believer in a position of authority in the local church. Not having had time to mature spiritually, he may become filled with pride and fall into the same sin that Satan committed. Hence, the sin that was found in Satan was the sin of pride. The first sinner ever was Satan. The first sin ever was the sin of pride.

The content of Satan's pride was his declaration of five *I wills*, found in Isaiah 14:12-14:

> *How are you fallen from heaven, O day-star, son of the morning! how are you cut down to the ground, that did lay*

> *low the nations! And you said in your heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; and I will sit upon the mount of congregation, in the uttermost parts of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.*

When Satan was welled up with pride, this pride led to the declaration of these five *I wills*. Each *I will* has a specific significance to it. First: *I will ascend into heaven*. He was not satisfied with the very high position God had already given him as the guardian of God's Throne and with authority over the Mineral Garden of Eden. He desired a higher position, a higher estate than he already had. There was no higher position than God's own Throne. With this first *I will*, he declared a desire to usurp God's own authority. Instead of being the one overshadowing the Throne, he now wished to become the throne-sitter. Second: *I will exalt my throne above the stars of God.* Whenever the word "stars" is used symbolically, it is always a symbol of angels with one possible exception. With the second *I will,* he declared his desire to become the sole authority over all the angels that God had created. By so doing, he intended to depose Michael from his position and become the Archangel all by himself. Third: *I will sit upon the mount of congregation, in the uttermost parts of the north*. These are expressions used by the prophets elsewhere in describing the Millennial or the Messianic Kingdom. Satan knew quite well that God's program for the Jewish people is for the Messiah to rule over the nation of Israel during the Kingdom. The third *I will* declared his desire to make himself the messianic ruler over Israel. Fourth: *I will ascend above the heights of the clouds*. Whenever the word *cloud* is used symbolically, it is always a symbol of God's glory, that unique glory called the *Shechinah* Glory. It is a glory that belongs to God alone and something which Satan desired all for himself. Fifth: *I will make myself like the Most High.* According to Genesis 14:18-20, whenever God is referred to as *the Most High*, it emphasizes God as the possessor of the heavens and the earth. With this fifth *I will*, Satan declared his desire to become the sole possessor of all that God created in the first verse of Genesis. These five *I wills* resulted from the pride of Satan and caused him to lead a revolt against God in which he was followed by one-third of the angelic host (Rev. 12:3-4). In this way, the *day-star, son of the morning*, became Satan the adversary. At that point judgment came upon him.

Ezekiel states: *till unrighteousness was found in you*. This is the closest the Bible comes to describing the origin of sin: Satan was perfect in all of his ways, in his being, in his actions, until at some point *unrighteousness was found* in him. At some point, corruption was found in him. One day, there it was. The Hebrew word for *unrighteousness* means "wrongdoings." Wrongdoings were found in him. The perfection of his ways or deeds eventually gave way to wrongdoings.

The fact that his deeds and actions were wrong presupposes a corruption of his person beforehand, because the corruption of a person precedes the corruption of deeds.

Both the corruption of his person and his deeds will be described. This is in verses 16-19:

> *By the abundance of your traffic they filled the midst of you with violence, and you have sinned: therefore have I cast you as profane out of the mountain of God; and I have destroyed you, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you have corrupted your wisdom by reason of your brightness: I have cast you to the ground; I have laid you before kings, that they may behold you. By the multitude of your iniquities, in the unrighteousness of your traffic, you have profaned your sanctuaries; therefore have I brought forth a fire from the midst of you; it has devoured you, and I have turned you to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold you. All they that know you among the peoples shall be astonished at you: you are become a terror, and you shall nevermore have any being.*

These verses describe the fall of the king of Tyre, or Satan, as a result of the unrighteousness found in him. The content of his wrongdoings is spelled out in verse 16a: *By the abundance of your traffic*. That same figure was used of the human prince of Tyre in verses 1-10. For the prince of Tyre, this meant going from port to port gathering wealth (v. 5). But for the king of Tyre, Satan, this meant going from angel to angel slandering God in order to win their allegiance. Eventually, he convinced one-third of all the angels that God was in the wrong (Rev. 12:4). In that way, Satan became the father of lies (Jn. 8:44), because he originated lying. The corruption of his being led to his wrong deed, and the wrong deed was lying about God. *They filled the midst of you with violence*. The words *they*

filled refer to the trafficking from angel to angel, bad-mouthing God. This led to violence, because it meant he led a revolt against God in Heaven. This began a conflict between good angels and bad angels, an angelic conflict that continues to this day, and will continue until the middle of the Tribulation, at which point it will finally end (Rev. 12:7-12). Then it states: *and you have sinned*. The Hebrew word for "sin" means "to miss the mark." As a result of his actions, he missed the mark of his high calling. Thus, Satan became the first sinner. While Eve was the first sinner in the human sphere, in the angelic realm, the first sinner was Satan. Satan's sin preceded Eve's sin.

Verse 16b describes the judgment of the king of Tyre or Satan. First: *therefore have I cast you as profane out of the mountain of God*. He lost the high position of his first abode, and the perfect cherub now became the profane cherub. He is no longer the guardian of God's Throne. Second: *I have destroyed you, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire*. This refers to the loss of his position in the second abode. *O covering cherub*, points out the loss of his position and priestly worship functions. The word *destroyed* does not mean destroyed in his being, but destroyed from his position. He was destroyed from his position in the Mineral Garden of Eden; he was destroyed from the midst of the stones of fire.

Verse 18a further reveals his sinful deeds. First: *By the multitude of your iniquities*. This is the third word used for a sin after "unrighteousness" and "sin." The word "iniquities" refers to his internal corruption. That single sin of pride led to a multitude of corruptions of his character. Second: this was proved by *the unrighteousness of your traffic*. Again the word *traffic* means going from angel to angel. The *unrighteousness* refers to unrighteous deeds. Satan went from angel to angel, slandering God. The corruption of his character led to deeds of corruption, and he, in turn, corrupted other angels by convincing them, so that one-third of the angels fell with him as a result. Third: *you have profaned your sanctuaries.* The word for *sanctuary* means "holy place." *Your sanctuaries* are the holy places of Heaven and refers to corruption in Heaven. The fact that it says *your sanctuaries* means "Satan's sanctuaries," and this also shows that Satan did have a priestly function in Heaven. As the high priest, he led the worship in Heaven in the heavenly sanctuaries before his fall. The word *sanctuaries* is in the plural because the heavenly Tabernacle had both a Holy Place and a Holy of Holies. His *sanctuaries* were in the

Tabernacle in Heaven. By his sin, he corrupted the sanctuaries in Heaven, because he sinned while he was still in Heaven. By performing sinful deeds in Heaven, he brought corruption to Heaven. This is the reason Hebrews 9:23-26 states that the heavens themselves needed cleansing by the blood of the Messiah. The heavens were corrupted and defiled by the fall of Satan. It took the blood of Jesus to cleanse the heavenly sanctuaries and that is why He had to take His blood into Heaven to cleanse the heavenly sanctuaries. That is why Mary Magdalene could not touch Him until He brought His blood into the heavenly sanctuaries and cleansed the heavenly Tabernacle (Jn. 20:17). Only then was He touchable.

Verse 17b decrees the punishment of the king of Tyre. First: *I have cast you to the ground*. This might be a summary of the loss of his first two abodes mentioned earlier in the passage. However, it might also be what is known as a prophetic perfect, in which a future event is stated as a past act. If it is a prophetic perfect, then it describes Satan's fall from the third abode to his fourth abode. Today Satan is dwelling in his third abode, the atmospheric heavens. According to Revelation 12:7-12, in the middle of the Tribulation, he will be cast out of the atmospheric heavens, cast down to the earth, and confined to the earth for the second half of the Tribulation. That will be his fourth abode, which will last for 3½ years. Second: *I have laid you before kings that they may behold you*. This did not happen at the time of Satan's fall, because no kings existed. In fact, he fell even before Adam and Eve were created. This is clearly a prophetic perfect, a reference to his last two abodes, the fifth abode and the sixth abode. The fifth abode will be the Abyss (Rev. 20:1-3), and his sixth abode will be the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:7-10). In both situations, he will be beheld by kings, in Hell or in the Lake of Fire.

Verse 18b deals further with the punishment: *therefore*, that is, because of verse 18a, three things come by way of punishment. First: *I brought forth a fire from the midst of you*. At one time, this fire was a mark of his glory. The fire which once glorified Satan will now be used to punish him. Previously, the stones of fire beautified him, but now fire will be used to punish him. This will be fulfilled when he is confined in his sixth abode, the Lake of Fire. The principle is that sin always carries within itself the seeds of its own destruction, and it will destroy the one performing this sin unless there is repentance and confession. Second: *it has devoured you*. This is a prophetic perfect speaking of the Lake of

Fire. Third: *I have turned you to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold you*. Insofar as the earth is concerned, he will be ashes; he will be nothing when he will be confined in his last two abodes. He will be beheld in the fifth abode, the Abyss (Rev. 20:1-3), and he will be beheld in the sixth abode, the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:7-10).

Finally, verse 19 gives the three results. First: *All they that know you among the peoples shall be astonished at you*. They that knew him include the angels that followed him in his revolt. It also includes the many followers he has had among humanity. Those who knew him will some day be astonished at him because of his demise. They thought that he would be their leader, their savior, their victor over God Himself. He will prove to be a failure, and this will astonish them. Second: y*ou are become a terror*. In the Hebrew text the word *terror* is in the plural, emphasizing the intensity of terror. He has greatly intensified terror. His fall will intensify terror even more because if the leader has been sentenced to the Lake of Fire, how much more true will this be for his followers? They will be filled with many terrors as a result of Satan's demise in the Lake of Fire. Third: y*ou shall nevermore have any being*. The Hebrew literally reads, "unto you nothing for a long time or forever." Of course, Satan shall always be. Satan is an eternal being and he will always exist. But the point is that he will no longer exist on this earth, and he will no longer be active. He will be forever and ever in the Lake of Fire. In that sense, he "shall never be any more."

When God judged Satan, He judged everything under Satan's authority, which meant judgment on the original earth, the Mineral Garden of Eden. The conditions of Genesis 1:2 came into being as a result of this judgment.[1] The earth became waste and void, although it was not originally created that way (Is. 45:18). The beautiful mineral garden that the planet once was became totally covered by oceans. Some time after

[1] It is agreed by most Hebrew scholars that Genesis 1:2 describes a chaotic state. The issue boils down to: Did God create it in a chaotic state and then bring order to it? Or, did some event cause it to become chaotic? The author prefers the second option because of Isaiah 45:18 and because terms used in Genesis 1:2 are used elsewhere in the Hebrew text describing divine judgments. Also, the new earth in Revelation 21:1-22:5 compares favorably with Ezekiel 28:13, showing that the new earth will look much like the old earth prior to the covering by seas in Genesis 1:2.

this came the six days of creation recorded in Genesis one. The oceans were partially removed to allow dry land to appear, but the effects of Satan's judgment are still here in that most of the earth is still covered by oceans. The effects of the fall of Satan will not be fully removed until the creation of the new heavens and the new earth, which will not have any oceans (Rev. 21:1). The new earth will be covered with the same type of precious stones that this earth was once covered with before the fall of Satan. In other words, the new earth, which will be the eternal abode of all believers, will look as this planet first looked when it was originally created.

It is evident that this author places the fall of Satan between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2. This position is often referred to as the "gap theory." But many people who hold to the gap theory do so for "dinosaur space." They attempt to fit the fossil and geological ages into the gap and are forced to make the gap millions of years long. Many have put a gap there, only to adapt their biblical interpretation to certain scientific theories, making it a convenient place to put the geological ages and the fossil record. Doing this to accommodate certain scientific theories is totally unnecessary. This is not the position of the author at all since, scripturally, it would be impossible for death to exist before the fall of man (Rom. 5:12). Thus, all fossils and mammoth creatures have coexisted with man rather than preceded man. There is a gap between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2 only for the fall of Satan, and this need not be a very long time at all.

On the sixth day of creation, God created man and gave him the authority over the earth which had been removed from Satan. But when man fell, Satan usurped authority over the earth, setting the stage for his activities in his third abode.

C. *The Third Abode: The Atmospheric Heavens*

The third and present abode of Satan is disclosed in Ephesians 2:2 and 6:12:

> *Wherein ye once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the powers of the air, of the spirit that now works in the sons of disobedience.* (2:2)

> *For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.* (6:12)

The first passage describes Satan as *the prince of the powers of the air*, while the second describes him as existing *in the heavenly places*. Accordingly, Satan's third abode can be labeled as the atmospheric heavens. He lives in the air or atmosphere.

While Satan lives in the atmosphere, he has permission of access into two places. First, he has access into Heaven and often uses it (Job 1:6; 2:1). His purpose for using this permission of access into Heaven is to be *the accuser of the brethren*. He functioned that way in the life of Job, and continues to do the same in the case of many believers today (Rev. 12:10), and also in the case of the nation of Israel (Zech. 3:1).

Second, Satan has permission of access to the earth and uses it frequently as well. As a result of Adam's Fall, he is now the prince of this world (Jn. 12:31), the god of this age (II Cor. 4:4), and the prince of the kingdom of this world and can offer them to whomever he wills (Lk. 4:5-7).

When Satan comes to the earth, it is in one of two forms. The first form is that of a *roaring lion* (I Pet. 5:8). In this form, his basic aim is to devour and destroy. This is the way he often appeared to Israel; all anti-Semitic campaigns throughout Jewish history have been instigated by Satan as the roaring lion. He has also often appeared to the Church in this form, and many of the persecutions against the Church throughout church history have been inspired by Satan as the roaring lion. Satan works on the principle that whosoever the Lord loves, Satan will hate. God, throughout the Prophets and New Testament, spelled out His eternal love for the people of Israel; therefore, Satan has had a perpetual war against the Jews, seeking to destroy them at every possible opportunity.

The second form in which Satan appears when he comes to the earth is *as an angel of light* (II Cor. 11:14). In this form, Satan's basic aim is to deceive. It is the ultimate carrying out of the fifth *I will—I will make myself like the Most High*. Even Satan knew he could not *be* the Most High, so he decided to become just *like* the Most High. By instigating a counterfeit program that often looks like the real program, he has been able to implement a work of deception even among the

true believers, encouraging them to become very experience-oriented and blinding them to their need of a careful study of the Word of God. The program of deception is carried out against both believers (II Cor. 11:3) and unbelievers (Rev. 20:3).

The nature of a counterfeit is to look like the genuine. Counterfeit money is not obviously phony money because it looks very much like the genuine. Many may have handled counterfeit money and not known it because few are trained to detect the difference between the counterfeit and the real thing. It takes those who have been so trained to be able to tell the difference. However, counterfeits do tend to have a flaw about them. Perhaps the wrong type of paper was used, the wrong type of ink or the wrong design in some obscure corner of the bill; but it is never an obvious phony. The flaw can only be determined if one has a good knowledge of the genuine. The same thing holds true in the spiritual realm. The first order of business is to know the genuine, and the genuine is contained in the written Word of God. It is the believer's obligation to study the Word and know God's program and God's way of doing things today. Then one will be able to recognize the counterfeit because of one's knowledge of the genuine. In the same way, Satan's counterfeit program looks very much like the real program of God contained in the pages of Scripture. Satan's program will not have obvious flaws in it. Therefore, believers must be trained in the Scriptures to be able to discern the difference between the real and the counterfeit.

The nature of the counterfeit program is found in II Corinthians 11:3-4:

> *But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve in his craftiness, your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity and the purity that is toward Christ. For if he that comes preaches another Jesus, whom we did not preach, or if ye receive a different spirit, which ye did not receive, or a different gospel, which ye did not accept, ye do well to bear with him.*

In verse four, Paul labeled three things by the word *another: another Jesus*, [another] *spirit*, [another] *gospel*. The Greek language has two different words which mean "another," but they carry a slightly different meaning. The first term means "another of the same kind." The second term means

"another of a different kind." With that in mind, a literal rendering of verse four would read as follows:

> *For if he that comes preaches another Jesus of the same kind whom we did not preach, or if you receive another spirit of a different kind which you have not received or another gospel of a different kind, which you did not accept, you do well to avoid him.*

The gospel being propagated is declared to be another gospel of a *different* kind. The source is another spirit of a *different* kind. The Jesus being presented or propagated is another Jesus of the *same* kind, one who seems like the Jesus of the New Testament but who is a counterfeit.

In verses 13-14 Paul states:

> *For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, fashioning themselves into apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for even Satan fashions himself into an angel of light.*

Those who are propagating a counterfeit Jesus are declared to be *false apostles*, but they do not appear as such because they "fashion themselves" to seem like and sound like real ministers of the Messiah. By so doing, they are reflecting their true lord—Satan, the angel of darkness, who fashions himself to appear as *an angel of light.* The nature of the counterfeit program is to propagate a Jesus that is very similar to the Jesus of the New Testament, but who is a counterfeit.

The extent of the counterfeit program, or how far it can be carried, is given to us in Matthew 7:22-23:

> *Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by your name, and by your name cast out demons, and by your name do many mighty works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*

It should be carefully noted what they are able to accomplish in the name of the counterfeit Jesus. They are able to cast out demons; they are able to prophesy events which do come to pass; and they are able to perform miracles, such as miracles of healings, among others. Yet Jesus will say to them: *I never knew you*. That is why all these outward manifestations in and of themselves prove nothing, because Satan can duplicate all of them. The real test is never the existence of outward manifestations. The real test

is always conformity to Scripture. Is that which is being said, being done, and being taught in conformity with the teachings of the written Word of God? That is our only real test. We have no other test by which to judge. In this modern day, when there is so much emphasis on the sensational, on the experiential, and on feelings, many believers are being caught up into various "super-spiritual" movements for no other reason than the existence of outward manifestations. By so doing, they never mature in the faith and produce in themselves the kind of fruit that God intends for believers to produce.

To summarize Satan's third abode: Today he dwells in the atmosphere; he has access to Heaven as *the accuser*; he has access to the earth either as *a roaring lion* for the purpose of destruction or as *an angel of light* for the purpose of deception. The counterfeit program is spread by counterfeit ministers of Jesus (II Cor. 11:13), preaching a counterfeit Jesus (II Cor. 11:3) and performing counterfeit signs, miracles, and wonders (Mat. 7:22-23).

Also involved as part of Satan's third abode is his work of temptation by which he was able to usurp authority over the earth by causing man to fall. To this day, he is still exercising his authority as the prince (Jn. 12:31) and god (II Cor. 4:4) of this world. By causing man to fall, Satan succeeded in keeping man from exercising the authority God had given him over the earth at his creation.

The last three abodes of Satan are all future.

D. The Fourth Abode: The Earth

Satan's fourth abode is described in Revelation 12:7-12:

> *And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels going forth to war with the dragon; and the dragon warred and his angels; and they prevailed not, neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast down, the old serpent, he that is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world; he was cast down to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him. And I heard a great voice in heaven, saying, Now is*

> *come the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, who accuses them before our God day and night. And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb, and because of the word of their testimony; and they loved not their life even unto death. Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe for the earth and for the sea: because the devil is gone down unto you, having great wrath, knowing that he has but a short time.*

This passage has already been discussed in the main body of this work, and so the details need not be repeated.[2] In summary, in the middle of the Tribulation, Satan will be cast out of his present third abode into his fourth abode, and so will be confined to this earth for the remainder of the Tribulation. He will remain in his fourth abode for a total of 3½ years. His program during the time spent in his fourth abode will be an attempt to destroy the Jews once and for all (Rev. 12:6, 13-17). He will attempt to do this by means of the two beasts of Revelation 13 (the Antichrist and the False Prophet). The details of his program of Jewish destruction and its outcome were discussed in previous chapters.[3]

E. The Fifth Abode: The Abyss

Satan's fifth abode is given in Revelation 20:1-3:

> *And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, the old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, and cast him into the abyss, and shut it, and sealed it over him, that he should deceive the nations no more, until the thousand years should be finished: after this he must be loosed for a little time.*

---

2 See Chapter 11, The Events of the Middle of the Tribulation.

3 See Chapter 13, The Great Tribulation: Added Features and Facts.

Satan's fifth abode will be the Abyss where he will be confined during the one thousand years of the Kingdom. As a result of his confinement in the Abyss, sin and death in the Kingdom will be greatly reduced, but not eliminated. Other details of this have already been discussed.[4] Here, it is important to note it will be during the Kingdom that man will achieve his goal, which was to exercise authority over the earth. As a result of Satan's confinement in his fifth abode and through the reign of the God-Man, Jesus the Messiah, man will fulfill his calling of exercising authority over the earth. This is clear from Hebrews 2:5-9:

> *For not unto angels did he subject the world to come, whereof we speak. But one has somewhere testified, saying, What is man, that you are mindful of him? Or the son of man, that you visit him? You made him a little lower than the angels; You crowned him with glory and honor, And set him over the works of your hands: you put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he subjected all things unto him, he left nothing that is not subject to him. But now we see not yet all things subjected to him. But we behold him who has been made a little lower than the angels, even Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God he should taste of death for every man.*

F. The Sixth Abode: The Lake of Fire

Satan's sixth abode is described in Revelation 20:7-10:

> *And when the thousand years are finished, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall come forth to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to the war: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up over the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down out of*

[4] See Chapter 15, The Seventy-five Day Interval, and Chapter 17, General Characteristics of the Messianic Kingdom.

> *heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where are also the beast and the false prophet; and they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.*

The details of this passage have also already been discussed.[5] Suffice it to say that the Lake of Fire will serve as Satan's sixth and final abode, where he will remain for all eternity along with all other fallen angels and unredeemed humanity. As a result of Satan's being cast into his sixth abode, two major effects of Satan's fall will be removed: death (I Cor. 15:24-26) and the seas (Rev. 21:1).

[5] See Chapter 21, The Aftermath.

APPENDIX II

II

II Thessalonians 2:1-12

In any book dealing with eschatology, the well-known passage of II Thessalonians 2:1-12 must be brought into the discussion. There has been much debate as to the exact point or points Paul wished to make, the identity of the restrainer, and exactly what is the relationship between the Antichrist and the restrainer. In dealing with this passage, perhaps it would be best to first summarize the main points made and then proceed to an analysis of the text. The main points appear to be as follows. *First*: to comfort the believers of Thessalonica, letting them know that they are not in the Tribulation, nor has the Tribulation arrived. *Second*: to teach that there will be two separate revelations of the Antichrist at different points in time. *Third*: that two things are being restrained: the mystery of lawlessness in general now, and the Antichrist specifically in the future.

With this background, the next step is to take a look at the passage itself, which reads as follows:

> *Now we beseech you, brethren, touching the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him; to the end that ye be not quickly shaken from your mind, nor yet be troubled, either by spirit, or by word, or by epistle as from us, as that the day of the Lord is just at hand; let no man beguile you in any wise: for it will not be, except the falling away come first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, he that opposes and exalts himself against all that is called God or that is worshipped; so that he sits in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know that which restrains, to the end that he may be revealed in his own season. For the mystery of lawlessness does already work: only there is one that restrains now, until*

> *he be taken out of the way. And then shall be revealed the lawless one, whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his mouth, and bring to nought by the manifestation of his coming; even he, whose coming is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceit of unrighteousness for them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God sends them a working of error, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*

Apparently, after Paul left Thessalonica some false teachers came in teaching a posttribulational doctrine and stated that the believers were now in the Tribulation. The Thessalonians were troubled that the *day of the Lord*, the most common title for the Great Tribulation, had already arrived (vv. 1-2). This was especially true since in the first Epistle he clearly taught them a Pretribulation Rapture. At this point, Paul stated that the Tribulation could not have come yet because two events, both of which must precede the Tribulation, had not yet occurred (v. 3). The *first* is the apostasy of the church, and the *second* is the revelation of the man of sin, the son of perdition. There is to be a revelation of the identity of the Antichrist that precedes the Tribulation, and it is for the believers living at that time. The Rapture may or may not have occurred by then, since the Scriptures do not state just how long before the Tribulation the Rapture will occur. Therefore, the revelation to believers before the Tribulation may be to the Church if the Rapture has not occurred, or it may be to a new generation of believers who will have accepted the gospel after the Rapture of the Church. Whoever the believers may be at that time, they will receive a revelation as to the identity of the Antichrist, and it will occur at some time before the Tribulation. The text does not state exactly how this revelation will come, but other Scriptures indicate that this revelation may come because of two things. *First*: it is clear from Daniel 9:27 that the Tribulation will begin with the signing of a seven-year covenant between Israel and the Antichrist. When this forthcoming covenant is announced, believers may become aware of the identity of the Antichrist. *Second*: it is also possible that believers will deduce who he is by the numerical value of the Antichrist's name, which will be 666.

Then two things are stated concerning this Antichrist (v. 4). *First*: he will be opposed to God and to all objects of veneration. *Second*: he will take over the Jewish Temple and declare himself to be god and will call all men to worship him. This event will occur in the middle of the Tribulation in conjunction with the Abomination of Desolation.

Verses 5-7 are somewhat parenthetical, as Paul reminds his readers of things he had taught them while he was still with them (v. 5). The key thing he had taught them was the fact that the takeover of the Jewish Temple and the self-declaration of deity will be restrained, and until the restrainer is removed, the events of verse four cannot occur (v. 6). It has already been shown in the main body of this book that what will restrain the Antichrist from full political and religious control will be three of the ten kings of the first half of the Tribulation and the governments they represent.[1] It is only when the last of these three kings has been killed, leading to complete submission by the other seven kings, that the Antichrist will be free to take over full global dictatorship and to carry out the events of verse four. Consequently, the last restrainer of the Antichrist will be the last of the three kings and the government which he represents. Then Paul reminds his readers that the mystery of lawlessness is already working and is even now being restrained (v. 7). The Holy Spirit is never described as restraining. The task of restraining evil was given to human government under the Noahic Covenant in Genesis 9:1-17, and this basic doctrinal truth was reiterated by Paul in Romans 13:1-7. On one hand, human government is even now restraining lawlessness. On the other hand, the government of the last of the three kings will restrain the Antichrist, the lawless one, until the middle of the Tribulation.[2]

After the parenthetical reminder of verses 5-7, in verses 8-12, Paul returns to where he left off at verse four. According to verse eight, the Abomination of Desolation of verse four will serve as the second revelation of the Antichrist. While the first revelation will be to the believers before the Tribulation, the second revelation in the middle of the Tribulation will be to Israel. By the very act of the Abomination of Desolation, the

---

1 See Chapter 2, The Times of the Gentiles, and Chapter 11, The Events of the Middle of the Tribulation.

2 For more details concerning this mystery, see Appendix VI, The Eight Mysteries of the New Testament.

Antichrist will be revealed as truly being the lawless one, and then Israel can realize with whom they have made their covenant. The act of the Abomination of Desolation is clearly stated by Jesus to be a sign to Israel in Matthew 24:15-22. Paul then proceeds to give further facts regarding the Antichrist. He will ultimately be destroyed by the Second Coming (v. 8b). He is the one who will be totally energized by Satan and will be able to do miracles (v. 9) for the purpose of worldwide deception, for he will call all men to worship him (v. 10). The ones who will be deceived by him and his counterfeit signs are those who have already rejected the gospel of the Lord Jesus (vv. 11-12). These verses have often been taken to mean that those who heard the gospel before the Rapture and did not believe will not have the opportunity to be saved after the Rapture and during the Tribulation. However, the passage itself places the rejection of the gospel during the Tribulation itself rather than before the Tribulation. It should be remembered that during the first half of the Tribulation there will be a worldwide preaching of the gospel by the 144,000 Jews (Mat. 24:14; Rev. 7). While myriads will accept the gospel, many more will not. Because these many will refuse to respond to the preaching of the 144,000 during the first half of the Tribulation, during the second half they will be deceived by the Antichrist and will begin to worship him. The initial act of worshiping the Antichrist will involve accepting the mark 666. Once this mark is taken, the individual will have reached the point of no return and will not have the opportunity to be saved from then on (Rev. 14:9-12).

APPENDIX III

The Wife of Jehovah and the Bride of Messiah

III

Many years ago, Dr. C. I. Scofield wrote a little booklet entitled, *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth*. In this booklet he showed how any clear understanding of the Bible required that proper distinctions be maintained. In fact, the mark of a Dispensationalist or a non-Dispensationalist often revolves around the understanding of key biblical distinctions. One of these key biblical distinctions is the one between Israel and the Church. A failure to maintain that distinction will only result in a misinterpretation of what the Scriptures teach about each entity.

The Scriptures maintain the distinction between Israel and the Church in a number of different ways, one of which is the distinction between the Wife and the Bride. In the Bible, Israel is represented as *the Wife of Jehovah*, whereas the Church is represented as *the Bride of the Messiah.*

A. Israel: The Wife of Jehovah

The relationship of Israel as the Wife of Jehovah is viewed throughout the Scriptures in various ways and facets. This relationship can be divided into six distinct stages through which this relationship develops.

1. Stage One: The Marriage Contract

To a casual and superficial reader, the Book of Deuteronomy seems to be merely a repetition of what Moses had written earlier in the books of Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers. In fact, the very title *Deuteronomy* means "second law" or "repetition of the law." Indeed, almost everything

found in the Book of Deuteronomy can also be found in the three preceding books of the Law of Moses. However, Deuteronomy is not merely a book of repetitions. The entire format of the Book of Deuteronomy is that of both an ancient suzerein-vassal treaty and an ancient marriage contract. In other words, what Moses did in Deuteronomy was to take all the various facets of the three earlier books and present them in the form of an ancient marriage contract. This book contains the marriage contract signed between Israel and God—where Israel became the Wife of Jehovah.

It is not feasible in this work to deal with the Book of Deuteronomy in its entirety and demonstrate how it fits into the scheme of a marriage contract. However, it is possible to concentrate on certain key passages.

The first passage is Deuteronomy 5:1-3:

> *And Moses called unto all Israel, and said unto them, Hear, O Israel, the statutes and the ordinances which I speak in your ears this day, that ye may learn them, and observe to do them. Jehovah our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. Jehovah made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day.*

This passage declares that God entered into a covenant with His people Israel at Mount Sinai. It will be seen later that the Jewish prophets always viewed this covenant relationship as a marriage contract.

Later, in Deuteronomy 6:10-15, God announced His jealousy over His wife, Israel:

> *And it shall be, when Jehovah your God shall bring you into the land which he swore unto your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give you, great and goodly cities, which you builded not, and houses full of all good things, which you filled not, and cisterns hewn out, which you hewed not, vineyards and olive-trees, which you planted not, and you shall eat and be full; then beware lest you forget Jehovah, who brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall fear Jehovah your God; and him shall you serve, and shall swear by his name. Ye shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the peoples that are round about you; for Jehovah*

> *your God in the midst of you is a jealous God; lest the anger of Jehovah your God be kindled against you, and he destroy you from off the face of the earth.*

In this passage, Israel is warned against adultery. Since Jehovah is Israel's husband, the means by which Israel can be guilty of adultery is by the worship of other gods. God warned Israel not to become an adulterous wife by playing around with other gods. The reason given is God's burning jealousy, lest it be kindled against her and eventually cause her expulsion out of the Land which God has given her.

In Deuteronomy 7:6-11, Israel is again described as the one chosen by God:

> *For you are a holy people unto Jehovah your God: Jehovah your God has chosen you to be a people for his own possession, above all peoples that are upon the face of the earth. Jehovah did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all peoples: but because Jehovah loves you, and because he would keep the oath which he swore unto your fathers, has Jehovah brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. Know therefore that Jehovah your God, he is God, the faithful God, who keeps covenant and lovingkindness with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations, and repays them that hate him to their face, to destroy them: he will not be slack to him that hates him, he will repay him to his face. You shall therefore keep the commandments, and the statutes, and the ordinances, which I command you this day, to do them.*

God first described the choosing (v. 6) and then He gave the reason (vv. 7-8). God did not choose Israel as His wife due to her size, because Israel was small. He had only one basic reason and that was His love for Israel. Because of His love for Israel, He entered into a covenant relationship with her. This covenant relationship is the marriage contract of Deuteronomy. But now Israel has an obligation (vv. 9-11). God implored Israel to faithfulness, to be a faithful wife to God by being obedient and subject to Him.

As was stated earlier, the prophets always looked at this covenant rela-

tionship as a marriage contract. One example is found in Ezekiel 16:8:

> *Now when I passed by you, and looked upon you, behold, your time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over you, and covered your nakedness: yea, I swore unto you, and entered into a covenant with you, says the Lord Jehovah, and you became mine.*

The words used by Ezekiel are words of the wedding night; the covenant at Sinai and the relationship between Israel and Jehovah is described by the prophet in the terms of the wedding night.

Thus, in the first stage of her relationship as the Wife of Jehovah, Israel entered into a marriage contract, and this marriage contract is the Book of Deuteronomy.

2. Stage Two: The Great Adultery

Although Israel was sternly admonished to remain faithful to her Husband, rather than being faithful, she was guilty of a great adultery, described by several Old Testament prophets. Jeremiah 3:1-5 states:

> *They say, If a man put away his wife, and she goes from him, and become another man's, will he return unto her again? will not that land be greatly polluted? But you have played the harlot with many lovers; yet return again to me, says Jehovah. Lift up your eyes unto the bare heights, and see; where have you not been lain with? By the ways have you sat for them, as an Arabian in the wilderness; and you have polluted the land with your whoredoms and with your wickedness. Therefore the showers have been withholden, and there has been no latter rain; yet you had a harlot's forehead, you refused to be ashamed. Will you not from this time cry unto me, My Father, you are the guide of my youth? Will he retain his anger for ever? will he keep it to the end? Behold, you have spoken and have done evil things, and have had your way.*

Israel was not merely guilty of a one-time adultery, but she was guilty of playing the prostitute with many lovers. Later, in verse 20, Jeremiah wrote:

> *Surely as a wife treacherously departs from her husband, so have ye dealt treacherously with me, O house of Israel, says Jehovah.*

In this passage, Jeremiah showed that Israel was indeed like a wife who has turned away from her husband. She was a wife guilty of adultery.

Because of this adultery, the original marriage contract was broken, according to Jeremiah 31:32:

> *Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they broke, although I was a husband unto them, says Jehovah.*

Adultery meant that the marriage contract was null and void. Jeremiah showed that the problem was not with the Husband, for God was a good Husband. Rather, the problem was with the Wife, who insisted on going after other gods and so became guilty of the great adultery.

Another prophet, Ezekiel, described this great adultery in an extended passage found in 16:15-34:

> *But you trusted in your beauty, and played the harlot because of your renown, and poured out your whoredoms on every one that passed by; his it was. And you took your garments, and made for yourself high places decked with divers colors, and played the harlot upon them: the like things shall not come, neither shall it be so. You also took your fair jewels of my gold and of my silver, which I had given you, and made for yourself images of men, and played the harlot with them; and you took your broidered garments, and covered them, and set my oil and my incense before them. My bread also which I gave you, fine flour, and oil, and honey, wherewith I fed you, you even set it before them for a sweet savor; and thus it was, says the Lord Jehovah. Moreover you have taken your sons and your daughters, whom you have borne unto me, and these have you sacrificed unto them to be devoured. Were your whoredoms a small matter, that you have slain my children, and delivered them up, in causing them to pass through the fire unto them? And in all your abominations and your whoredoms you have not remembered the days*

> *of your youth, when you were naked and bare, and were weltering in your blood. And it is come to pass after all your wickedness, (woe, woe unto you! says the Lord Jehovah,) that you have built unto yourself a vaulted place, and have made yourself a lofty place in every street. You have built your lofty place at the head of every way, and have made your beauty an abomination, and have opened your feet to every one that passed by, and multiplied your whoredom. You have also committed fornication with the Egyptians, your neighbors, great of flesh; and have multiplied your whoredoms, to provoke me to anger. Behold therefore, I have stretched out my hand over you, and have diminished your ordinary food, and delivered you unto the will of them that hate you, the daughters of the Philistines, that are ashamed of your lewd way. You have played the harlot also with the Assyrians, because you were insatiable; yea, you have played the harlot with them, and yet you were not satisfied. You have moreover multiplied your whoredom unto the land of traffic, unto Chaldea; and yet you were not satisfied herewith. How weak is your heart, says the Lord Jehovah, seeing you do all these things, the work of an impudent harlot; in that you build your vaulted place at the head of every way, and make your lofty place in every street, and have not been as a harlot, in that you scorn hire. A wife that commits adultery! that takes strangers instead of her husband! They give gifts to all harlots; but you give your gifts to all your lovers, and bribe them, that they may come unto you on every side for your whoredoms. And you are different from other women in your whoredoms, in that none follow you to play the harlot; and whereas you give hire, and no hire is given unto you, therefore you are different.*

Ezekiel declares Israel's guilt by showing her that she had indeed played the part of a prostitute (v. 15). Although prostitutes generally receive money for their services, Israel was somewhat different because she paid her lovers (vv. 16-19), and she paid them with the very things that *her true Husband*, God, had given to her as His wife. Furthermore, Israel's very children were sacrificed to these lovers, the pagan gods (vv. 20-21). Israel indeed forgot the love of her youth when God first entered into

the covenant relationship with her (v. 22). Ezekiel next portrayed the lovers that Israel went after (vv. 23-29). These lovers were the gods of the Egyptians and the Assyrians and the Babylonians. The absurdity of Israel's adultery is clearly spelled out here. The very nations which these foreign gods represented did the most to hurt Israel. Israel suffered terribly from the hands of the Egyptians, Assyrians, and Babylonians. Yet, rather than turning to *her own husband*, Jehovah, Israel went after the gods of these nations and committed adultery with those that hurt her the most.

Another prophet, Hosea, also described this adultery in Hosea 2:2-5:

> *Contend with your mother, contend; for she is not my wife, neither am I her husband; and let her put away her whoredoms from her face, and her adulteries from between her breasts; lest I strip her naked, and set her as in the day that she was born, and make her as a wilderness, and set her like a dry land, and slay her with thirst. Yea, upon her children will I have no mercy; for they are children of whoredom; for their mother has played the harlot; she that conceived them has done shamefully; for she said, I will go after my lovers, that give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, my oil and my drink.*

Hosea declared the charge God had against Israel: she was guilty of harlotry. She committed adultery (vv. 2-3), she produced children of adultery and hence they were illegitimate (v. 4), and she played the part of a prostitute (v. 5).

So in spite of God's manifold blessings to Israel, Israel turned away from God in order to play the part of a prostitute and was guilty of the great adultery.

3. *Stage Three: The Separation*

Because of this adultery, in the days of Isaiah a separation took place between God and Israel. This separation is described in Isaiah 50:1:

> *Thus says Jehovah, Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement, wherewith I have put her away? or which of*

> *my creditors is it to whom I have sold you? Behold, for your iniquities were ye sold, and for your transgressions was your mother put away.*

According to Deuteronomy 24:1, if a husband wished to divorce his wife, he had to write out a decree, or what is better known as a bill of divorcement. After having written it out in longhand, he would give it to his wife and then the divorce was final. By the time Isaiah became a prophet, Israel's adultery was so great that it was necessary for God to withhold His many blessings from her—the blessings described in the Book of Deuteronomy, to be received if Israel remained faithful. This removal of the blessings caused many in Israel to say that God had divorced His wife. Therefore, God spoke to Isaiah the Prophet, stating that He had not yet divorced His wife. If God had divorced His wife, He would have given Israel a bill of divorcement; since no such bill of divorcement was in hand, it meant that a divorce had not taken place.

Rather than a divorce, a separation had taken place. But the separation was caused by their own sins. The sin of Israel in committing adultery created the need for the separation. In the days of Isaiah, God and Israel were not divorced, but they were separated. This separation was due to Israel's adultery and lasted approximately one hundred years.

4. Stage Four: The Divorce

Even after about one hundred years of separation, during which time the blessings of Deuteronomy continued to be withheld, Israel still failed to return to God, her husband. Thus, God was forced to finally issue the bill of divorcement and to divorce His wife, Israel. This bill of divorcement is contained in Jeremiah 3:6-10:

> *Moreover Jehovah said unto me in the days of Josiah the king, Have you seen that which backsliding Israel has done? she is gone up upon every high mountain and under every green tree, and there has played the harlot. And I said after she had done all these things, She will return unto me; but she returned not: and her treacherous sister Judah saw it. And I saw, when, for this very*

> *cause that backsliding Israel had committed adultery, I had put her away and given her a bill of divorcement, yet treacherous Judah her sister feared not; but she also went and played the harlot. And it came to pass through the lightness of her whoredom, that the land was polluted, and she committed adultery with stones and with stocks. And yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah has not returned unto me with her whole heart, but feignedly, says Jehovah.*

After once again declaring Israel guilty of adultery (vv. 6-8), God finally issued His bill of divorcement. The Book of Hosea was God's bill of divorcement of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, and the Book of Jeremiah is the bill of divorcement of the Southern Kingdom of Judah. The reason this bill of divorcement was necessary was due to the adulterous pollution of the Land God had given to the people of Israel (vv. 9-10).

So in the days of Jeremiah the Prophet, the people of Israel were divorced. One hundred years of separation failed to produce repentance in Israel, and finally God had no other choice but to issue the bill of divorcement on the grounds of adultery.

5. Stage Five: The Punishment

The Book of Deuteronomy, the original marriage contract, clearly declared that if Israel proved unfaithful as Jehovah's wife, it would become necessary for God to punish her for her unfaithfulness. And so following the issuing of the bill of divorcement comes a long period of the punishment of Israel for her sins.

Several Old Testament prophecies speak of the punishment of Israel for her unfaithfulness. Ezekiel 16:35-43 states:

> *Wherefore, O harlot, hear the word of Jehovah: Thus says the Lord Jehovah, Because your filthiness was poured out, and your nakedness uncovered through your whoredoms with your lovers; and because of all the idols of your abominations, and for the blood of your children, that you did give unto them; therefore behold, I will gather all your lovers, with whom you have taken pleasure, and all them that you have loved, with all them that you have*

> *hated; I will even gather them against you on every side, and will uncover your nakedness unto them, that they may see all your nakedness. And I will judge you, as women that break wedlock and shed blood are judged; and I will bring upon you the blood of wrath and jealousy. I will also give you into their hand, and they shall throw down your vaulted place, and break down your lofty places; and they shall strip you of your clothes, and take your fair jewels; and they shall leave you naked and bare. They shall also bring up a company against you, and they shall stone you with stones, and thrust you through with their swords. And they shall burn your houses with fire and execute judgments upon you in the sight of many women; and I will cause you to cease from playing the harlot, and you shall also give no hire any more. So will I cause my wrath toward you to rest, and my jealousy shall depart from you, and I will be quiet, and will be no more angry. Because you have not remembered the days of your youth, but have raged against me in all these things; therefore, behold, I also will bring your way upon your head, says the Lord Jehovah: and you shall not commit this lewdness with all your abominations.*

After stating the cause for the punishment, adultery (vv. 35-36), Ezekiel described the punishment itself. Israel will be destroyed by her very own lovers (vv. 37-41). Because she worshiped the gods of the Egyptians, the Egyptians will destroy her. Because she worshiped the deities of Assyria, the Assyrians will devastate her. Because she worshiped the idols of Babylon, the Babylonians will make her desolate. The nations who worshiped the very gods Israel committed adultery with will be the ones who will invade and destroy the nation of Israel. Then the jealousy of God will finally be spent (v. 42) for, as the Book of Deuteronomy declared, the punishment of Israel would be a result of God's jealousy for His wife. However, all this punishment has a specific aim. The aim of this punishment is not so God can be vengeful and get His revenge upon Israel, but rather to cause her to stop sinning and to stop her adulteries (v. 43).

Later in this chapter, in verses 58-59, Ezekiel showed that this punishment was necessary because Israel broke the marriage contract:

> *You have borne your lewdness and your abominations, says*

> *Jehovah. For thus says the Lord Jehovah: I will also deal with you as you have done, who have despised the oath in breaking the covenant.*

The program of punishment is further described in Hosea 2:6-13:

> *Therefore, behold, I will hedge up your way with thorns, and I will build a wall against her, that she shall not find her paths. And she shall follow after her lovers, but she shall not overtake them; and she shall seek them, but shall not find them: then shall she say, I will go and return to my first husband; for then was it better with me than now. For she did not know that I gave her the grain, and the new wine, and the oil, and multiplied unto her silver and gold, which they used for Baal. Therefore will I take back my grain in the time thereof, and my new wine in the season thereof, and will pluck away my wool and my flax which should have covered her nakedness. And now will I uncover her lewdness in the sight of her lovers, and none shall deliver her out of my hand. I will also cause all her mirth to cease, her feasts, her new moons, and her sabbaths, and all her solemn assemblies. And I will lay waste her vines and her fig-trees, whereof she has said, These are my hire that my lovers have given me; and I will make them a forest, and the beasts of the field shall eat them. And I will visit upon her the days of the Baalim, unto which she burned incense, when she decked herself with her earrings and her jewels, and went after her lovers, and forgot me, says Jehovah.*

The program itself is described in verses 6-7. Israel's searching ways will be blocked by various thorns and walls that speak of God's providential dealings with Israel (v. 6), until her search for her old lovers will prove fruitless (v. 7a). The purpose of this program is to show Israel her need for her true Husband and not for her false lovers (v. 7b). Then, in verses 8-13, Hosea depicted the punishment itself. It has been shown earlier that the very things God gave to Israel she used in order to pay her lovers. So now these very things she paid her lovers with will be taken away, for they belong to her Husband (vv. 8-9). She will finally realize her shame only when she sees herself truly spiritually naked, her joy removed, her material blessings gone, all because of the worship of the Canaanite god, *Baal* (vv. 10-13).

Although God has a long program of punishment for Israel's sins, throughout the period of punishment there is a continual call to repentance. This continual call to repentance is presented in Jeremiah 3:11-18:

> *And Jehovah said unto me, Backsliding Israel has showed herself more righteous than treacherous Judah. Go, and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, Return, you backsliding Israel, says Jehovah; I will not look in anger upon you; for I am merciful, says Jehovah, I will not keep anger for ever. Only acknowledge your iniquity, that you have transgressed against Jehovah your God, and have scattered your ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, says Jehovah. Return, O backsliding children, says Jehovah; for I am a husband unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion: and I will give you shepherds according to my heart, who shall feed you with knowledge and understanding. And it shall come to pass, when ye are multiplied and increased in the land, in those days, says Jehovah, they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of Jehovah; neither shall it come to mind; neither shall they remember it; neither shall they miss it; neither shall it be made any more. At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of Jehovah; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of Jehovah, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the stubbornness of their evil heart. In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I gave for an inheritance unto your fathers.*

Jeremiah described God's continual call for Israel to repent and come back to Him (vv. 11-13). This call is followed by a description of the blessings God has in store for Israel once she does return to Him (vv. 14-18). After declaring that Jehovah will again be a Husband to her (v. 14), He also promised to restore and to provide for Israel like a husband should (vv. 15-18). All these beautiful material blessings are promised to Israel and are awaiting her return to her Husband.

To this day, Israel is still in the fifth stage of her historical and pro-

phetic relationship with Jehovah, her God. Israel is still in the period of punishment. This is evidenced by the persecutions of the Jews around the world and by the present worldwide dispersion. But there is one stage yet to come.

6. Stage Six: The Remarriage with Restored Blessings

The Jewish prophets did not leave things in a state of hopelessness. They spoke of a coming day when Israel will again become the restored Wife of Jehovah. Of course, this will require a brand-new marriage contract, and this marriage contract is found in Jeremiah 31:31-34:

> *Behold, the days come, says Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they broke, although I was a husband unto them, says Jehovah. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says Jehovah: I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people: and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, says Jehovah: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more.*

What is often known as the New Covenant is in many respects a new marriage contract that God will make with the two houses of Israel and Judah. This new covenant of marriage (v. 31) will be necessary because the old marriage covenant was broken (v. 32). Although God was a good husband, Israel strayed away and by means of adultery caused the original marriage contract to be broken. But now, with this new marriage contract, Israel will again be restored to the place of blessing (vv. 33-34).

This remarriage on the basis of a new marriage contract is also described in Ezekiel 16:60-63:

> *Nevertheless I will remember my covenant with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish unto you an everlasting covenant. Then shall you remember your ways, and be ashamed, when you shall receive your sisters, your elder sisters and your younger; and I will give them unto you for daughters, but not by your covenant. And I will establish my covenant with you; and you shall know that I am Jehovah; that you may remember, and be confounded, and never open your mouth any more, because of your shame, when I have forgiven you all that you have done, says the Lord Jehovah.*

According to Ezekiel, God will enter into *an everlasting covenant* with Israel in the future. This everlasting covenant is the same as the New Covenant in Jeremiah 31:31-34. This new and everlasting covenant is also a new marriage contract upon which the remarriage will be based.

The restoration of Israel as Jehovah's wife is also described in Isaiah 54:1-8:

> *Sing, O barren, you that did not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, you that did not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, says Jehovah. Enlarge the place of your tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of your habitations; spare not: lengthen your cords, and strengthen your stakes. For you shall spread abroad on the right hand and on the left; and your seed shall possess the nations, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited. Fear not; for you shall not be ashamed: neither be confounded; for you shall not be put to shame: for you shall forget the shame of your youth; and the reproach of your widowhood shall you remember no more. For your Maker is your husband; Jehovah of hosts is his name: and the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer; the God of the whole earth shall he be called. For Jehovah has called you as a wife forsaken and grieved in spirit, even a wife of youth, when she is cast off, says your God. For a small moment have I forsaken you; but with great mercies will I gather you. In overflowing wrath I hid my face from you for a moment; but with everlasting lovingkindness will I have mercy on you, says Jehovah your Redeemer.*

Isaiah began by declaring that the restored wife will now begin to bear legitimate children (vv. 1-3). Israel had produced a lot more children in desolation than she produced when she was previously married to Jehovah (v. 1). In fact, Israel produced many illegitimate children and very few legitimate ones, and the ones who were legitimate were often sacrificed to the foreign gods. But now all this is to change. Isaiah tells Israel to enlarge her house (vv. 2-3) in order to accommodate the many legitimate children about to come. The reason for this new activity and the coming legitimate children is the reunion of the marriage (vv. 4-8). Israel's former adulteries will all be forgotten (v. 4), and Jehovah will once again be her Husband (v. 5). God will again court His wife as He courted her when she was a youth (v. 6), and all past forsakings will now be substituted by renewed blessings (vv. 7-8).

This remarriage is further described by Isaiah 62:4-5:

> *You shall no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall your land any more be termed Desolate: but you shall be called Hephzi-bah, and your land Beulah; for Jehovah delights in you, and your land shall be married. For as a young man marries a virgin, so shall your sons marry you; and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.*

The land that Israel lost because of her adultery is to be totally restored. Like a new husband rejoices over his virgin bride, in this same way God will rejoice over His restored wife.

Hosea, who had much to say about the adulteries of Israel, also spoke of Israel's reunion with her husband. He wrote in 2:14-23:

> *Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her. And I will give her her vineyards from there, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope; and she shall make answer there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt. And it shall be at that day, says Jehovah, that you shall call me Ishi, and shall call me no more Baali. For I will take away the names of the Baalim out of her mouth, and they shall no more be mentioned by their name. And in that day will I make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the birds of the heavens, and with the creeping things of the ground: and I will break the*

> *bow and the sword and the battle out of the land, and will make them to lie down safely. And I will betroth you unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth you unto me in righteousness, and in justice, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth you unto me in faithfulness; and you shall know Jehovah. And it shall come to pass in that day, I will answer, says Jehovah, I will answer the heavens, and they shall answer the earth; and the earth shall answer the grain, and the new wine, and the oil; and they shall answer Jezreel. And I will sow her unto me in the earth: and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them that were not my people, You are my people; and they shall say, You are my God.*

Hosea began by describing the courtship and the wooing in the wilderness (vv. 14-15). Israel will again be allured into the wilderness (in the land of Edom and the city of Bozrah) where God will speak to her heart in courtship, and when she responds all her vineyards will be restored. The results of this restoration are described next (vv. 16-23). There will be four results of this reunion. The *first* result (vv. 16-17) is that Israel will no longer address God as *Baali*, but as *Ishi*. There is a very interesting play upon words in the Hebrew text by the usage of these two Hebrew words. Both words, *Baali* and *Ishi*, are good Hebrew words meaning "my husband." While they both mean "my husband," there is a slight difference of emphasis in their meaning. *Ishi* means "my husband" in the sense of "my man." *Baali* means "my husband" in the sense of "my master." Both words are perfectly good Hebrew words for "my husband" and are used interchangeably throughout the Scriptures. Nevertheless, God said that the title of *Baali* will no longer be used, but only *Ishi*. The reason for this is the fact that the word *Baali* sounds very much like one of the gods with whom Israel committed adultery: the god *Baal*. If Israel were to continue to call God *Baali* in the future, she might begin to remember her former lover, *Baal*. So in order to avoid even the hint of remembrance of the other lover, *Baal*, Israel will no longer address God as *Baali*, but only as *Ishi*. The *second* result (v. 18) is peace and safety. Israel will never again be invaded by the nations whose gods she once worshiped. The *third* result (vv. 19-20) is the new betrothal. The word *betroth* is used three different times, and the three usages describe the three elements of this new betrothal. *First*: as to *time*, it will be forever. *Second*: as to *content*, it will be in righteousness, justice,

lovingkindness, and mercy. *Third*: as to *quality*, it will be in faithfulness. The *fourth* result (vv. 21-23) is the new meaning to *Jezreel*. This term can mean two things: *God scatters* and *God sows.* During the period of punishment, Israel experienced the first meaning, *God scatters*. Israel was scattered outside the Land. But now Israel will experience the second meaning, *God sows*. Now God will sow Israel back into the Land. The Valley of Jezreel, Israel's largest valley and the most productive, had often failed to produce because God removed His blessings. But now, with the remarriage having taken place, all of God's blessings will be restored in the Valley of Jezreel, and it will produce almost as soon as the field is sown.

Summary

These, then, are the six stages of Israel's relationship as the Wife of Jehovah, a wife whom God married but who committed adultery. Eventually, a separation took place, followed by a divorcement, and today Israel is in her period of punishment. However, there will yet come the time when Israel will be remarried, at her national regeneration, and be reunited to her God with all of her blessings restored.

B. The Church: The Bride of the Messiah

There is a totally different picture in the Scriptures regarding the Church. What God has to say about the Church and her relationship as the Bride of the Messiah is radically different from what has been said regarding Israel as the Wife of Jehovah. This demonstrates the necessity of maintaining these distinctions.

The thrust of all New Testament passages regarding this relationship of the Church as the Bride of the Messiah is that the Church is a betrothed bride that is not yet joined to her husband. There are four key passages of the New Testament that speak of this relationship of the Church as the Bride of the Messiah. Again, it must always be kept in mind that the Church is pictured today as an engaged bride who is not yet joined by marriage to her husband.

1. The Espousal—II Corinthians 11:2

> *For I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy: for I espoused you to one husband, that I might present you as a pure virgin to Christ.*

Speaking to a part of the Church, the local church found in the city of Corinth, Paul declared that by means of evangelism, they were espoused to one husband for the purpose of eventually being presented as a pure virgin to the Messiah. The means by which this will be accomplished is the process of sanctification.

Unlike Israel, who was guilty of adultery, when the union comes between the Messiah and the Church, the Church will be presented as a pure virgin.

2. The Process of Sanctification or Maturing of the Bride—Ephesians 5:25-27

> *Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it; that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.*

The Messiah loved the Church and proved His love by dying for the Church. The purpose of the death of the Messiah in His relationship with the Church is that He might sanctify the Church, which is necessary in order for the Church to be presented as a pure virgin, as pictured in II Corinthians 11:2.

This sanctification takes place by a continual washing in the water of the Word. The Church is being sanctified by the Word of God. The Holy Spirit is working in the Church so that the true Church is slowly being conformed to the Word of God by which it will also be cleansed. The *water* in this passage is not water baptism, but a description of the Word of God in its cleansing ministry.

The aim of this process of sanctification and cleansing of the Church is that the Church might be presented a glorious virgin to the Messiah. When

this process is finally complete, the Church will be presented without spot (no visible defilement), without wrinkle (no evidence of age or corruption), and holy, without blemish (no evidence of sin).

3. The Marriage—Revelation 19:6-9

In order to fully comprehend what is happening in Revelation 19:6-9, it is first necessary to understand the Jewish wedding system that was common in Jesus' day and was still used among Jews until the beginning of the twentieth century.[1] The Jewish marriage system had four distinct stages, all of which are to be found in the relationship of the Church as the Bride of the Messiah. In the *first* stage, the father of the groom made *the arrangement* for the bride and paid the bride price. This first stage might happen when the children are very young, or one year prior to the marriage. Thus, a long period of time could transpire between the first and second stage. The minimum was one year. Often the bride and groom did not meet each other until their wedding day.[2] Eventually came the *second* stage, known as *the fetching of the bride*. In this second stage, the groom would go to the home of the bride in order to fetch her and bring her to his home. This was often done in accompaniment with a wedding procession. However, the father of the groom determined when the fetching would occur. Furthermore, it had to wait until the groom had a place prepared for her. Then came the *third* stage, which was *the marriage ceremony* to which only a few would be invited. This was preceded by a ritual immersion for ritual cleansing. Finally came the *fourth* stage, *the marriage supper* or *feast*, which would last for as long as seven days. Many others not invited to the ceremony were invited to the feast.

All four stages of the Jewish wedding system are to be found in the relationship of the Church and the Messiah. First, the Father of the Groom made *the arrangement* for the Bride and paid the bride price. In this case, the bride price was the blood of the Messiah. This was described earlier, in Ephesians 5:25-27. While the first stage has already been completed,

---

1 This system today is used only by the Ultra-Orthodox Jews and Jews who remain in some eastern nations.

2 This was true of the author's great grandparents, who first met each other on their wedding day.

the other three stages are still future.

The second stage was *the fetching of the bride.* Even as a long period of time could transpire between the first and second stages in the Jewish system, so it has been with the Church. Almost two thousand years have passed since the first stage was accomplished. Some day the second stage will take place, when Jesus will come in order to fetch the Bride to His home. This fetching of the Bride is referred to today as the Rapture of the Church and is described in I Thessalonians 4:13-18:

> *But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that fall asleep; that ye sorrow not, even as the rest, who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.*

Thus, with the Rapture of the Church some time before the beginning of the Tribulation, the second stage will be completed. God the Father will determine the timing of this event (Mat. 24:36). Furthermore, it will only come after Jesus has the place prepared (Jn. 14:1-3).

The third stage, *the marriage ceremony*, will take place in Heaven just prior to the Second Coming at the end of the Tribulation. This is described in Revelation 19:6-8:

> *And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, saying, Hallelujah: for the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns. Let us rejoice and be exceeding glad, and let us give the glory unto him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife has made herself ready. And it was given unto her that she should array herself in fine linen, bright and pure: for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.*

The wedding announcement will be made (v. 6) and the Bride will finally be made ready (v. 7). The reason the Bride will now be fully ready for the marriage ceremony is because she will have her entire bridal gown on (v. 8). This bridal gown is said to be *the righteous acts of the saints*. This teaches two things. *First*: it shows that the process of sanctification will indeed be completed, for all that will be showing on the Bride are her righteous acts. *Second*: this also shows that the marriage ceremony takes place after the Judgment Seat of the Messiah, when the saints are rewarded for their deeds on earth (I Cor. 3:10-15). All the wood, hay, and stubble has been burned away and all the gold, silver, and precious stones have been purified. This corresponds to the ritual cleansing of the Jewish wedding system. The ones present at the marriage ceremony are the "few," that is, only those in Heaven at that time.

After the marriage ceremony will come the fourth stage, *the marriage feast*, described in Revelation 19:9:

> *And he says unto me, Write, Blessed are they that are bidden to the marriage supper of the Lamb.*

Since many are bidden and invited to come to the marriage feast, this passage indicates that the marriage supper or feast will be at a different place than the marriage ceremony. According to the Word of God, the Old Testament saints are resurrected not with the Church before the Tribulation, but after the Tribulation (Dan. 12:2). John the Baptist, who was the last of the Old Testament prophets, called himself a *friend of the bridegroom* and did not consider himself to be a member of the Bride, the Church (Jn. 3:27-30). Hence, the "many" who are bidden to attend the marriage feast on earth are all the Old Testament saints and the Tribulation saints resurrected after the Second Coming. While the marriage ceremony will take place in Heaven just before the Second Coming, the marriage feast will take place on earth after the Second Coming. In fact, it would seem that the marriage feast is what begins the Millennium or the Messianic Kingdom; the Church's co-reigning with the Messiah will start with a tremendous marriage feast. Hence, the Kingdom parables are at times connected with the wedding feast (Mat. 22:1-14; 25:1-13). With the marriage feast, all four stages will be complete.

4. The Eternal Abode of the Bride—Revelation 21:9-22:5

The final picture that the Scriptures give of the Bride of the Messiah is contained in the closing chapters of the Bible itself. In Revelation 21:9 John states:

> *And there came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls, who were laden with the seven last plagues; and he spoke with me, saying, Come here, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.*

In this passage, as a result of the four earlier stages, the Bride is now the married wife. Then in the following verses (21:10-22:5), there is a graphic description of the glorious eternal abode of the Wife of Messiah in the New Jerusalem on the new earth.

Conclusion

While the distinction between Israel and the Church is maintained in various ways, this is one of the more picturesque. But this is one area of study that would be impossible to understand without knowing that such a distinction indeed exists. If one makes the Wife of Jehovah and the Bride of the Messiah one and the same, he is faced with numerous contradictions because of the different descriptions given. Only when one sees two separate entities, Israel as the Wife of Jehovah and the Church as the Bride of the Messiah, do all such contradictions vanish.

APPENDIX IV

The Shechinah *Glory in History and Prophecy*

A. Definitions

By way of definition, the *Shechinah* Glory *is the visible manifestation of the presence of God*. It is the majestic presence or manifestation of God in which He descends to *dwell* among men. Whenever the invisible God becomes visible, and whenever the omnipresence of God is localized, this is the *Shechinah* Glory.

The usual title found in the Scriptures for the *Shechinah* Glory is *the glory of Jehovah*, or *the glory of the Lord*. The Hebrew form is *Kvod Adonai*, which means "the glory of Jehovah" and describes what the *Shechinah* Glory *is*. The Greek title, *Doxa Kurion*, is translated as "the glory of the Lord." *Doxa* means "brightness," "brilliance," or "splendor," and it depicts how the *Shechinah* Glory *appears*.

Other titles give it the sense of "dwelling," which portrays what the *Shechinah* Glory *does*. The Hebrew word *Shechinah*, from the root *shachan*, means "to dwell." The Greek word *skeinei*, which is similar in sound as the Hebrew *Shechinah* (Greek has no "sh" sound), means "to tabernacle."

As has been stated, the *Shechinah* Glory is the visible manifestation of the presence of God. In the Old Testament, most of these visible manifestations took the form of light, fire, or cloud, or a combination of these. A new form appears in the New Testament: the Incarnate Word.

At times the *Shechinah* Glory is closely associated with one or more of four elements: *first*, the Angel of Jehovah; *second*, the Holy Spirit; *third,* the *cherubim*; and *fourth,* the motif of thick darkness.

B. The Shechinah *Glory in Old Testament History*

1. The Garden of Eden

It is possible that the first appearance[1] in human history of the *Shechinah* Glory is found in Genesis 3:8:

> *And they heard the voice of Jehovah God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of Jehovah God among the trees of the garden.*

According to this verse, the first parents experienced the personal presence of God. There was a daily manifestation of God's presence fellowshiping with them. No details are given, and whether or not this can indeed be called the first manifestation of the *Shechinah* Glory is impossible to answer. But the indication is that this was a manifestation of the glory of God.

However, if it is not, then Genesis 3:23-24 is where the first appearance of the *Shechinah* Glory is to be found:

> *Therefore Jehovah God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden the Cherubim, and the flame of a sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.*

The phrase *and he placed* reads in Hebrew *vayashkhein*, which has the same root as *Shechinah*, and literally means "and he caused to dwell." This was a visible dwelling of the presence of God, and the visible form it took was *the flame of a sword*. The definite article makes it specific: "*the* flame" of the sword. Here was a visible manifestation of the glory of God where the *Shechinah* appeared as fire. Another point that should be noted here

[1] It is also possible that the first appearance of the *Shechinah* Glory was the light of the first day of creation in Genesis 1:3-5, since this light was distinct from the sun, which was only created on the fourth day. The fact that the New Jerusalem on the new earth will not need the sun but will be lighted by the *Shechinah* Glory strongly indicates that it was the same *Shechinah* light that lightened the earth during the first three days of creation.

is that the *Shechinah* is associated with the *cherubim*, one of four such associations.

2. The Abrahamic Covenant

While the content of the Abrahamic Covenant is found in several parts of Genesis, the sealing and signing of the covenant is in 15:12-18:

> *And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, a horror of great darkness fell upon him. And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that your seed shall be sojourners in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. But you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried in a good old age. And in the fourth generation they shall come here again: for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet full. And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold, a smoking furnace, and a flaming torch that passed between these pieces. In that day Jehovah made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto your seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.*

In verse 12, the motif of an unusual *darkness* in association with the *Shechinah* Glory appears for the first time. After summarizing the content of the Abrahamic Covenant (vv. 13-16), it was signed (v. 17). God appeared in a visible form: that of a smoking furnace and a flaming torch. Thus, it was by means of the *Shechinah* Glory that God signed the Abrahamic Covenant, which, in turn, became the basis of the three other unconditional covenants God made with Israel: the Land, the Davidic, and the New Covenants.

Besides Genesis, the *Shechinah* Glory is also found in the books of Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers. In the Book of Exodus, the *Shechinah* Glory took its residence with Israel and authenticated the Law of Moses. In Leviticus, it authenticated the Aaronic priesthood. In Numbers, the *Shechinah* Glory rendered judgment for sin and disobedience.

3. The Burning Bush

The *Shechinah* Glory is found next in Exodus 3:1-5:

> *Now Moses was keeping the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the back of the wilderness, and came to the mountain of God, unto Horeb. And the angel of Jehovah appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will turn aside now, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when Jehovah saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off your shoes from off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground.*

In this passage, God manifested Himself to Moses in a visible way. Verses 2-3 state what was visible: *a flame of fire* and *a bush* burning *with fire*. Again, the fire motif is found in relation to the visibility of the *Shechinah* Glory. Here the *Shechinah* Glory is associated with the Angel of Jehovah which, from a study of all related passages, is clearly the second Person of the Trinity: Messiah Jesus, the Son of God.

That the flame of fire and the bush burning with fire was a manifestation of the *Shechinah* Glory becomes evident from Deuteronomy 33:16:

> *And for the precious things of the earth and the fulness thereof, And the good will of him that dwelled in the bush: Let the blessing come upon the head of Joseph, And upon the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren.*

In this passage, the phrase, *of him that dwelled in the bush,* reads in Hebrew *shochni sneh*. The first word, meaning "dwelling," is from the same root that is found in the word *Shechinah*. It is the *Shechinah* that commissioned Moses to bring Israel from the land of Egypt.

4. The Exodus

During the Exodus, the *Shechinah* Glory appeared as the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. In Exodus 13:21-22, the *Shechinah*

led Israel out of Egypt and into the wilderness:

> *And Jehovah went before them by day in a pillar of cloud, to lead them the way, and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; that they might go by day and by night: the pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night, departed not from before the people.*

Exodus 14:19-20 adds a further ministry of the *Shechinah* Glory:

> *And the angel of God, who went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud removed from before them, and stood behind them: and it came between the camp of Egypt and the camp of Israel; and there was the cloud and the darkness, yet gave it light by night: and the one came not near the other all the night.*

In this passage, the *Shechinah* Glory protected the Israelite's camp from the Egyptians all night, because it separated the Egyptian army from the Israelites. Once again, the *Shechinah* Glory is associated with the Angel of Jehovah. Furthermore, it is associated with thick darkness, yet giving light within the thick darkness.

In Exodus 14:24, the *Shechinah* Glory destroyed the Egyptian host:

> *And it came to pass in the morning watch, that Jehovah looked forth upon the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of cloud, and discomfited the host of the Egyptians.*

In Exodus 16:6-12, the *Shechinah* Glory provided Israel with the quail and the manna:

> *And Moses and Aaron said unto all the children of Israel, At even, then ye shall know that Jehovah has brought you out from the land of Egypt; and in the morning, then ye shall see the glory of Jehovah; for that he hears your murmurings against Jehovah: and what are we, that ye murmur against us? And Moses said, This shall be, when Jehovah shall give you in the evening flesh to eat, and in the morning bread to the full; for that Jehovah hears your murmurings which ye murmur against him: and what*

> *are we? your murmurings are not against us, but against Jehovah. And Moses said unto Aaron, Say unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, Come near before Jehovah; for he has heard your murmurings. And it came to pass, as Aaron spoke unto the whole congregation of the children of Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness and, behold, the glory of Jehovah appeared in the cloud. And Jehovah spoke unto Moses, saying, I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel: speak unto them, saying, At even ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that I am Jehovah your God.*

In verse seven of this passage, the first occurrence of the actual title for the *Shechinah* Glory appears as it is found in the Scriptures: *the glory of Jehovah*. In verse ten, the glory appeared and was revealed in the cloud, and this is another form of the visible *Shechinah* Glory.

5. Mount Sinai

The greatest manifestation of the *Shechinah* Glory during the time of the Exodus was at Mount Sinai itself. Its initial revelation is in Exodus 19:16-20, at the time of the giving of the Ten Commandments:

> *And it came to pass on the third day, when it was morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of a trumpet exceeding loud; and all the people that were in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And mount Sinai, the whole of it, smoked, because Jehovah descended upon it in fire; and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. And when the voice of the trumpet waxed louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him by a voice. And Jehovah came down upon mount Sinai, to the top of the mount: and Jehovah called Moses to the top of the mount; and Moses went up.*

In verse 16, there was the appearance of *thunders*, *lightnings, and a thick*

cloud. In verse 18, *Jehovah descended upon it in fire*, and verse twenty shows that this was a visible manifestation of God's presence, for it clearly states that *Jehovah came down on Mount Sinai*.

But such a manifestation of the presence of God put fear into the people. They saw the Glory of Jehovah at Mount Sinai and requested to hear the Voice of God no more:

> *And all the people perceived the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the voice of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they trembled, and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, Speak you with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die. And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before you, that ye sin not. And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was.* (Ex. 20:18-21)

This factor is reiterated in Deuteronomy 5:22-27:

> *These words Jehovah spoke unto all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice: and he added no more. And he wrote them upon two tablets of stone, and gave them unto me. And it came to pass, when ye heard the voice out of the midst of the darkness, while the mountain was burning with fire, that ye came near unto me, even all the heads of your tribes, and your elders; and ye said, Behold, Jehovah our God has showed us his glory and his greatness, and we have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire: we have seen this day that God does speak with man, and he lives. Now therefore why should we die? for this great fire will consume us: if we hear the voice of Jehovah our God any more, then we shall die. For who is there of all flesh, that has heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived? Go you near, and hear all that Jehovah our God shall say: and speak you unto us all that Jehovah our God shall speak unto you; and we will hear it, and do it.*

In Exodus 24:15-18, there is the presence of the *Shechinah* Glory at the time of the giving of the Tablets of the Law:

> *And Moses went up into the mount, and the cloud covered the mount. And the glory of Jehovah abode upon mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days: and the seventh day he called unto Moses out of the midst of the cloud. And the appearance of the glory of Jehovah was like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel. And Moses entered into the midst of the cloud, and went up into the mount: and Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights.*

In verse 15, a cloud covered Mount Sinai, and verse 16 states that it was the Glory of Jehovah that *abode on Mount Sinai*. The Hebrew word for *abode* is *vayishkhon*, which contains the root of the word *Shechinah*. In verse 17, the appearance of the glory of Jehovah was *like a devouring fire*. Here the *Shechinah* had the forms of cloud, fire, and light.

So in the Mount Sinai appearances of the *Shechinah* Glory, there are the forms of light, fire, cloud, lightning, and the motif of thick darkness, all of which are Old Testament visible manifestations of God's presence.

6. *The Special Manifestation of the* Shechinah *Glory to Moses*

Moses received a very special revelation of the *Shechinah* Glory. In Exodus 33:17-23 Moses made a dramatic request:

> *And Jehovah said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that you have spoken; for you have found favor in my sight, and I know you by name. And he said, Show me, I pray you, your glory. And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before you, and will proclaim the name of Jehovah before you; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. And he said, You cannot see my face; for man shall not see me and live. And Jehovah said, Behold, there is a place by me, and you shall stand upon the rock: and it shall come to pass, while my glory passes by, that I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and will cover you with my hand until I have passed by: and I will take away my hand, and you shall see my back; but my face shall not be seen.*

In verse 18, Moses specifically requested to see God's glory. In verse 23, God stated that Moses will be able to see the *back* parts, but will not be able to see God's face. Dr. Dwight Pentecost feels that the word should be translated as "afterglow."[2] In other words, God said to Moses that he will see His passing brilliance, but will not see God as He really is. While the Hebrew word does not actually mean "afterglow," the basic idea may be correct. Moses will not see God as He really is, but he will see a greater visible manifestation of God's glory than all previous manifestations. This was God's promise to Moses.

Exodus 34:5-9 records the fulfillment of that promise:

> *And Jehovah descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of Jehovah. And Jehovah passed by before him, and proclaimed, Jehovah, Jehovah, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abundant in lovingkindness and truth; keeping lovingkindness for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin; and that will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, upon the third and upon the fourth generation. And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped. And he said, If now I have found favor in your sight, O Lord, let the Lord, I pray you, go in the midst of us; for it is a stiffnecked people; and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for your inheritance.*

In this passage there was another revelation of the *Shechinah* Glory of God, and to Moses the very Name of the Lord was proclaimed. Moses saw a new manifestation of God's glory which up to then no other man had seen. In verse nine, at the conclusion of this manifestation, Moses made a request for the continual dwelling of that *Shechinah* Glory in the midst of the people of Israel. It was a request God would partially answer when He took His abode in the Tabernacle, although Moses' request for the eternal abiding could not be fulfilled at this time.

This experience of Moses in seeing a new visibility of God's glory and

---

[2] Pentecost, J. Dwight. *Pattern for Maturity* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1966), p. 15.

a greater manifestation of God's presence did not leave Moses untouched, as Exodus 34:29-35 shows:

> *And it came to pass, when Moses came down from mount Sinai with the two tablets of the testimony in Moses' hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses knew not that the skin of his face shone by reason of his speaking with him. And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone; and they were afraid to come near him. And Moses called unto them; and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned unto him: and Moses spoke to them. And afterward all the children of Israel came near: and he gave them in commandment all that Jehovah had spoken with him in mount Sinai. And when Moses had done speaking with them, he put a veil on his face. But when Moses went in before Jehovah to speak with him, he took the veil off, until he came out; and he came out, and spoke unto the children of Israel that which he was commanded. And the children of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses' face shone: and Moses put the veil upon his face again, until he went in to speak with him.*

When the face of Moses shone, the *Shechinah* Glory was visible on Moses' face. It was not the actual glory of the Lord that manifested itself on Moses' face, but rather Moses was *reflecting* the glory he had just seen. The relationship of Moses to the *Shechinah* was similar to the relationship of the moon to the sun. Light originates from the sun, and the moon simply reflects the light from the sun. In the same way the face of Moses reflected the light that originated with the *Shechinah* Glory. The shining manifestation of the glory of God permeated the person of Moses and manifested itself in the shining of his face. After the proclamation of the Law, Moses then veiled his face.

The reason for this veil is not given in Exodus, but it is explained in II Corinthians 3:12-18:

> *Having therefore such a hope, we use great boldness of speech, and are not as Moses, who put a veil upon his face, that the children of Israel should not look stedfastly on the end of that which was passing away: but their minds were*

> *hardened: for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant the same veil remains, it not being revealed to them that it is done away in Christ. But unto this day, whensoever Moses is read, a veil lies upon their heart. But whensoever it shall turn to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit.*

Moses did not veil his face because Israel could not behold this reflected glory. On the contrary, Moses knew that the reflected glory was temporary, and he did not want Israel to see the fading away or the passing away of that reflection. The fact that the reflected glory on Moses' face was temporary was being veiled from Israel.

7. The Tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant

The purpose of the Tabernacle is given in Exodus 29:42-46:

> *It shall be a continual burnt-offering throughout your generations at the door of the tent of meeting before Jehovah, where I will meet with you, to speak there unto you. And there I will meet with the children of Israel; and the Tent shall be sanctified by my glory. And I will sanctify the tent of meeting, and the altar: Aaron also and his sons will I sanctify, to minister to me in the priest's office. And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God. And they shall know that I am Jehovah their God, that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I might dwell among them: I am Jehovah their God.*

In verse 43, the Tabernacle was to be sanctified by the *Shechinah* Glory. In verse 45, the Tabernacle was for the purpose that God could *dwell* with the children of Israel. The Hebrew for "I will dwell" is *shachanti*, which has the same root as the word *Shechinah*.

Once the Tabernacle was finished, then the *Shechinah* Glory made its residence within the Tabernacle according to Exodus 40:34-38:

> *Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of Jehovah filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of meeting, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of Jehovah filled the tabernacle. And when the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel went onward, throughout all their journeys: but if the cloud was not taken up, then they journeyed not till the day that it was taken up. For the cloud of Jehovah was upon the tabernacle by day, and there was fire therein by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys.*

Verse 34 describes how the cloud covered the Tabernacle, and then the glory of Jehovah filled the Tabernacle. The Hebrew word for "tabernacle" is *Hamishkhan*, having the same root as *Shechinah*. Thus, the word "tabernacle" can also be translated as "the dwelling place of the *Shechinah*." In verse 35, the cloud took its abode and dwelling with Israel. The word "abode" is a translation of the Hebrew, *shachan*, where once again the same root is found. Finally, in verses 36-38, this cloud led Israel through the wilderness wanderings.

On this occasion the *Shechinah* Glory made its residence with Israel by making its abode in the Holy of Holies over the Ark of the Covenant and under the *cherubim*. After the glory of Moses' face faded, God manifested His glory through the Tabernacle. The Tabernacle itself had no external beauty in that it was covered with weather-beaten animal skins. But God used the unattractive to reveal and manifest His glory to Israel. The Holy of Holies had no window, but was absolutely dark, and is referred to in other passages as *the thick darkness.* It was dark except for the shining of the *Shechinah* Glory. If one ever wondered how the high priest was able to perform his duties in the Holy of Holies in pitch blackness, the answer is that he had light, as it was manifested through the shining *Shechinah* Glory.

8. The Book of Leviticus

While in Exodus the *Shechinah* Glory authenticated the Law and eventually made its residence in the Holy of Holies, in the Book of

Leviticus the *Shechinah* Glory authenticated those who had to carry out the practice of the Law and the Tabernacle, namely the Aaronic priesthood.

The key chapter is Leviticus nine. In verses 6-7, there is the promise of authentication:

> *And Moses said, This is the thing which Jehovah commanded that ye should do: and the glory of Jehovah shall appear unto you. And Moses said unto Aaron, Draw near unto the altar, and offer your sin-offering, and your burnt-offering, and make atonement for yourself, and for the people; and offer the oblation of the people, and make atonement for them; as Jehovah commanded.*

This is followed by the authentication of the priesthood in verses 22-24, and the authentication was by fire:

> *And Aaron lifted up his hands toward the people, and blessed them; and he came down from offering the sin-offering, and the burnt-offering, and the peace-offerings. And Moses and Aaron went into the tent of meeting, and came out, and blessed the people: and the glory of Jehovah appeared unto all the people. And there came forth fire from before Jehovah, and consumed upon the altar the burnt-offering and the fat: and when all the people saw it, they shouted, and fell on their faces.*

9. *The Book of Numbers*

In the Book of Numbers, the *Shechinah* Glory rendered judgment for sin and disobedience. This occurred on three occasions.

First: in Numbers 13:30-14:45, it was the *Shechinah* Glory that rendered judgment upon Israel at Kadesh Barnea when the people revolted against the rulership of Moses because of the discouraging report by ten of the twelve spies. This judgment sentenced the Tribes of Israel to wander in the wilderness for a period of forty years. In 14:10, the *Shechinah* Glory protected Moses and Aaron from stoning and, in 14:22, the reason for the severity of the judgment is given: they *saw my glory*, and yet they rebelled and would not believe.

Second: the *Shechinah* Glory is next seen in Numbers 16:1-50 in

connection with the rebellion of Korah. In verse 19, the *Shechinah* authenticated the authority of Moses and rejected Korah. In verses 42-45, the *Shechinah* Glory sent out a plague among the people for murmuring over Korah's death.

Third: in Numbers 20:6-13, the *Shechinah* Glory appeared in the incident over the waters of Meribah.

10. The Period of Joshua and the Judges

During this long period, the *Shechinah* Glory continued to dwell in the Holy of Holies of the Tabernacle, and apart from that there were no special manifestations of the *Shechinah* Glory. When the Philistines captured the Ark of the Covenant from Israel and brought it into Philistia, there was fear among the people that they had lost the visible manifestation of God's presence, according to I Samuel 4:21-22:

> *And she named the child Ichabod, saying, The glory is departed from Israel; because the ark of God was taken, and because of her father-in-law and her husband. And she said, The glory is departed from Israel; for the ark of God is taken.*

The name *Ichabod* means "the glory has departed." Eli's daughter-in-law was wrong, of course, for though the fear of it was certainly there, the *Shechinah* Glory had not yet departed from Israel at this time.

11. The Solomonic Temple

When Solomon built his Temple, he also built a brand new Holy of Holies. At this time the *Shechinah* Glory was transferred from the Tabernacle to the Holy of Holies in the Temple. The key passage is I Kings 8:1-13 (a parallel passage is II Chr. 5:2-7:3). In verses 1-9, the Ark of the Covenant was brought into the Holy of Holies, then in verses 10-13, the transfer of the *Shechinah* Glory took place:

> *And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of Jehovah, so that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud;*

> *for the glory of Jehovah filled the house of Jehovah. Then spoke Solomon, Jehovah has said that he would dwell in the thick darkness. I have surely built you a house of habitation, a place for you to dwell in for ever.*

In verse 10, the cloud filled the house and, in verse 11, the Glory of Jehovah filled the house. This is similar to what happened at the time that the *Shechinah* Glory made its abode in the Tabernacle. In verse 12, the *Shechinah* Glory began to dwell in the thick darkness of the Holy of Holies. The term "to dwell" is a translation of the Hebrew *lishkhon*, which is from the same root as *Shechinah*. In verse 13, the point is made that this was a house of habitation, a place for God to dwell in His visible manifestation as the *Shechinah* Glory. Like Moses before him, Solomon also prayed that the *Shechinah* Glory would dwell with Israel forever. But again, this was not a prayer God would answer at this time.

12. The Book of Ezekiel and the Departure of the Shechinah *Glory*

Historically speaking, the *Shechinah* Glory next appeared to Ezekiel in order to reveal its coming departure from Israel. That it was the *Shechinah* Glory that was showing Ezekiel the revelation found in his book is seen in Ezekiel 1:28; 3:12, 23; and 8:3-4. In these passages, the *Shechinah* is always associated with the *cherubim*, as it was in the Garden of Eden and in the Tabernacle and the Temple. It is also associated here with the Holy Spirit. The Book of Ezekiel relates the departure of the *Shechinah* Glory. The *Shechinah* Glory left Israel reluctantly in four stages.

The first stage of the departure was from the Holy of Holies (first position) to the threshold of the door of the Temple (second position). This is described in Ezekiel 9:3a:

> *And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, whereupon it was, to the threshold of the house:...*

And again in 10:4:

> *And the glory of Jehovah mounted up from the cherub, and stood over the threshold of the house; and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of Jehovah's glory.*

The second stage of the departure of the *Shechinah* Glory occurred with the movement of the *Shechinah* from the threshold of the door of the Temple to the eastern gate (third position), in Ezekiel 10:18-19:

> *And the glory of Jehovah went forth from over the threshold of the house, and stood over the cherubim. And the cherubim lifted up their wings, and mounted up from the earth in my sight when they went forth, and the wheels beside them: and they stood at the door of the east gate of Jehovah's house; and the glory of the God of Israel was over them above.*

In the third stage, the *Shechinah* Glory departed from the eastern gate and moved over to the Mount of Olives (fourth position) in Ezekiel 11:22-23:

> *Then did the cherubim lift up their wings, and the wheels were beside them; and the glory of the God of Israel was over them above. And the glory of Jehovah went up from the midst of the city, and stood upon the mountain which is on the east side of the city.*

Finally, in the fourth stage of departure, the *Shechinah* Glory left Israel and disappeared from Jewish history. It is only here that we truly see *ichabod*, the glory had departed. In rabbinic tradition, the *Shechinah* Glory remained on the Mount of Olives for three and a half years, waiting for Israel to repent. When Israel failed to do so, it departed from the Mount of Olives.

13. The Second Temple

After the return of the Jews from Babylon, the Second Temple was built. But the *Shechinah* Glory was not in the Second Temple as it was in the First Temple, according to Haggai 2:3:

> *Who is left among you that saw this house in its former glory? and how do ye see it now? is it not in your eyes as nothing?*

However, Haggai 2:9 contained a promise:

> *The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former,*

> *says Jehovah of hosts; and in this place will I give peace, says Jehovah of hosts.*

In this verse, Haggai the Prophet promised that the glory that had departed would come in some different and greater way to that Second Temple. Unlike the Tabernacle and the First Temple, the Second Temple did not begin with a manifestation of the *Shechinah* Glory. But the promise was made that the glory that once departed would come in a greater way to that very same Second Temple. They would again see the manifestation of God's presence in the *Shechinah* Glory. The fact that this Temple was destroyed in A.D. 70 necessitates the fulfillment of Haggai's prophecy to be prior to that time.

C. *The* Shechinah *Glory in New Testament History*

1. Appearance to the Shepherds

The first historical appearance of the *Shechinah* Glory in the New Testament is in Luke 2:8-9:

> *And there were shepherds in the same country abiding in the field, and keeping watch by night over their flock. And an angel of the Lord stood by them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.*

In this passage, it was *the glory of the Lord* that appeared, and it *shone round about them*. This is clearly the reappearance of the *Shechinah* Glory. It announced the birth of the Messiah to Jewish shepherds.

2. The Christmas Star

Matthew 2:1-12 contains the record of the visit of the Magi from the east who were led there by a visible star. That this was no ordinary star is evident by the actions that this star took: *first*, the star appeared and disappeared on at least two occasions; *second*, the star led them from the east to the west; *third*, it led them from the north to the south; *fourth*, the star stood over the very house where Jesus was; and *fifth*, it was *His*

privately-owned star in a sense that is not true of any other star. All this rules out that this star was just an ordinary star. The Greek word for *star* simply means "radiance" or "brilliance." Coming in the form of a light, this was the reappearance of the *Shechinah* Glory, announcing the birth of the Messiah to Gentiles.

3. *The Coming of the* Shechinah *Glory in a New Form*

The *Shechinah* Glory reappeared in a completely new form in the fulfillment of the Haggai prophecy. This is the point of John 1:1-14. This passage proclaims the coming of the *Shechinah* light in a new visible manifestation. Verse 14 focuses on the new form of the *Shechinah* Glory:

> *And the Word became flesh, and dwelled among us (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth.*

The word translated "dwelled" is the Greek word *skeinei*, which parallels the Hebrew, *Shechinah*, and Hellenized (Greek does not have an "sh" sound). But literally, the Greek word *skeinei*, does not mean "to dwell," for which there is a different Greek word *Skeinei* means "to tabernacle." Verse 14 literally reads: "The Word became flesh and tabernacled among us." In other words, it was a new visible manifestation of the presence of God dwelling among men. The result of this "tabernacling" was that men were able to behold the glory in the form of a man: the God-Man. This was a fulfillment of Isaiah 9:2, which spoke of the coming of the light:

> *The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwelled in the land of the shadow of death, upon them has the light shined.*

The many times that Jesus walked in the Temple Compound during His ministry fulfilled the prophecy of Haggai. His glory was manifested by His cleansing of the Temple of the money changers and sellers of sacrifices, and by His teaching in the Temple Compound, especially during the Feasts of Passover and Tabernacles.

The parallel with the Old Testament should not be missed. In the beginning of its history, the *Shechinah* Glory appeared and disappeared

before making a more permanent abode in the Tabernacle and Temple. It then departed from the Mount of Olives. In New Testament history, it first appeared and disappeared, and then came in a more permanent form in the Person of the Messiah, abiding with Israel for an extended period of time. Later, it too departed Israel from the Mount of Olives, after a public ministry of three and a half years.

4. The Transfiguration

The greatest manifestation of the *Shechinah* Glory in the Person of Jesus is found in the Transfiguration passages. The four passages where a description is given are Matthew 17:1-8; Mark 9:2-8; Luke 9:28-36; and II Peter 1:16-18. These passages give different descriptions of what occurred which, taken singly or all together, picture the brilliance of the *Shechinah* Glory.

In the Matthew passage, *His face did shine as the sun, and His garments became white as the light*. A bright cloud overshadowed Him, and the Voice of God spoke *out of the cloud*, authenticating the Messiahship of Jesus. The appearance of the cloud and the Voice of God speaking out of the cloud was the very same thing that had occurred at Mount Sinai. This description clearly reflects the *Shechinah* manifestations of the Old Testament developed further in the New Testament, as they are fulfilled in the Person of the Messiah. While the shining of the face of Moses was that of a reflected glory, the shining of the face of Jesus was the shining of the *Shechinah* Glory itself. Moses was like the moon, but Jesus was like the sun.

The Mark passage states that *his garments became glistening, exceeding white, so as no fuller on earth can whiten them*, and *a cloud overshadowed* Him.

In the Luke passage, *the fashion of His countenance was altered, and His raiment became white and dazzling*. They *saw His glory* while the *cloud overshadowed* Him.

In the II Peter passage, Peter proclaimed what he saw on the Mount of Transfiguration and claimed to be an *eyewitness of His majesty*. The Messiahship of Jesus was authenticated by this majestic glory.

Jesus was the visible manifestation of God's presence in a new form. At the Mount of Transfiguration, the glory that was veiled by the human body shone through, and three of the Apostles were able to behold the

Shechinah Glory in its brightness and in a form greater than what had appeared in the Old Testament. For besides the repetition of the Old Testament manifestations, there was also the unique *Shechinah* manifestation of Jesus Himself as the God-Man.

The Messiah as the new manifestation of God's presence is taught in later New Testament writings as well. In II Corinthians 4:5-6 Paul wrote:

> *For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. Seeing it is God, that said, Light shall shine out of darkness, who shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*

This passage states that through Jesus light shines out of darkness, and the light is that of *the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ*. Clearly, then, the glory of God was manifested in the Person of Jesus, and Jesus was indeed a new manifestation of God's presence.

This is further developed by Hebrews 1:1-3:

> *God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, has at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the worlds; who being the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of his substance, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high:...*

In verse one, it is stated that in the past God had revealed Himself in a number of different ways, but in verse two, He has now revealed Himself through the Son. But then verse three describes the Son, and the description is that of the *Shechinah* Glory. The Son is described as the brightness of the Father's glory and the very image of His substance.

Another example is found in the midst of a description of the Glorified Son of Man in Revelation 1:12-16. The latter part of verse 16 reads:

> *And his countenance was as the sun shines in his strength.*

The outward appearance of Jesus exuded such brightness that the glory of the shining is comparable to that of the sun. The physical body of Jesus no longer veils the shining brightness of the glory.

5. The Reflection of that Glory

Just as Moses for a time reflected the glory that he beheld at Sinai when God manifested Himself to Moses in a greater way, believers today can also reflect the glory of the Messiah, Who was an even greater manifestation of the *Shechinah* Glory, according to II Corinthians 3:12-18:

> *Having therefore such a hope, we use great boldness of speech, and are not as Moses, who put a veil upon his face, that the children of Israel should not look stedfastly on the end of that which was passing away: but their minds were hardened: for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant the same veil remains, it not being revealed to them that it is done away in Christ. But unto this day, whenever Moses is read, a veil lies upon their heart. But whenever it shall turn to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit.*

The imagery is taken from the account of the reflecting of God's glory through Moses' face. It is pointed out that the face of Moses was veiled so that the fading of the glory should not be seen (vv. 12-13). This veil still remains, for Israel has failed to see the passing away of the Dispensation of the Law (vv. 14-15). The veil is removed from Jewish eyes only when they turn from the Law to Jesus the Messiah (vv. 16-17). When Moses turned away from the people to the Lord, the veil was removed. In the same way, when the Jew turns away from the Law to Jesus the Messiah, that veil is also removed. Then, in verse 18, Paul deals with the reflection of the *Shechinah* Glory by believers. The believer beholds the glory of the Lord with an unveiled face, and he is transformed into the same image from glory to glory. The glory seen in the Messiah creates a similar glory in the believer. It is Jesus Who possesses the *Shechinah* Glory, but the believer is to reflect the glory of the Messiah in him. While with Moses the reflection was seen by the shining of his face, in the case of the believer, the reflection is to be seen in the transformation of the believer's life into one with a spiritual character. As it was in the case of the Ezekiel passages, the *Shechinah* Glory in this passage is connected

with the Holy Spirit. For the means of spirituality is by being filled or controlled by the Holy Spirit.

That believers are to reflect the *Shechinah* Glory of the Messiah is also taught in Ephesians chapter one. In verse six, the believer is *to the praise of the glory of his grace*. In verse 12, the believer should be *to the praise of His glory*. In verse 14, the believer is *unto the praise of his glory*. In verse 18, the believer is *the glory of his inheritance in the saints*. (cf. Rom. 8:29; Phil. 3:21; Col. 3:10).

6. The Book of Acts

The *Shechinah* Glory was seen on two occasions in the Book of Acts. The first is found in Acts 2:1-3:

> *And when the day of Pentecost was now come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them tongues parting asunder, like as of fire; and it sat upon each one of them.*

The visibility of *tongues parting asunder, like as of fire* was the manifestation of the *Shechinah* Glory. Following a motif already found in the Old Testament, the *Shechinah* appears in the form of fire with a close association to the Holy Spirit.

The second occurrence is far more evident: the appearance to Paul on the Damascus Road. It is recorded in three different parts of the Book of Acts. First, in 9:3-8:

> *And as he journeyed, it came to pass that he drew nigh unto Damascus: and suddenly there shone round about him a light out of heaven: and he fell upon the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? And he said, Who are you, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom you persecute: but rise, and enter the city, and it shall be told to you what you must do. And the men that journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing the voice, but beholding no man. And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw nothing; and they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus.*

Second, in 22:6-11:

> *And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and drew nigh unto Damascus, about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me. And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? And I answered, Who are you, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you persecute. And they that were with me beheld indeed the light, but they heard not the voice of him that spoke to me. And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told to you of all things which are appointed for you to do. And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me I came into Damascus.*

Third, in 26:13-18:

> *At midday, O king, I saw on the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them that journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice saying unto me in the Hebrew language, Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? it is hard for you to kick against the goad. And I said, Who are you, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom you persecute. But arise, and stand upon your feet: for to this end have I appeared unto you, to appoint you a minister and a witness both of the things wherein you have seen me, and of the things wherein I will appear unto you; delivering you from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom I send you, to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in me.*

In 9:3, the *Shechinah* Glory is described as a light shining out of Heaven. In 22:6, it is further described as being a great light out of Heaven. Later, in verse 11, Paul testifies that he was blinded because of the glory of that light. In 26:13, this light is described as being *above the brightness of the sun*. It is the *Shechinah* Glory that appeared to Paul to commission him to become the Apostle to the Gentiles.

7. The Revelation

The last historic appearance of the *Shechinah* Glory was to the Apostle John in Revelation 1:12-16, discussed earlier. This passage describes how Jesus looks today in the fullness of His glory. His physical body no longer veils the shining brightness of His glory.

The purpose of this final historic manifestation was to commission John to write the Book of Revelation and, by so doing, to bring the Scriptures to a close.

D. The Shechinah Glory in Prophecy

1. The Great Tribulation

The only passage that somehow relates the *Shechinah* Glory to the Great Tribulation is Revelation 15:8:

> *And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and none was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angles should be finished.*

In this passage, the *Shechinah* Glory is connected with the Bowl Judgments, which will be the final and most severe series of judgments in the Tribulation. These judgments will bring to a completion the wrath of God. In the Book of Numbers, the *Shechinah* Glory rendered judgment for sin, and it will do so again in the Great Tribulation.

2. The Second Coming of the Messiah

With the Second Coming there will again be the manifestation of the *Shechinah* Glory in His visible and physical presence. Matthew 16:27 reads:

> *For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then shall he render unto every man according to his deeds.*

The point of this passage is that the Son of Man will come *in the glory of His Father*. Just as in John 1:14 men were able to behold the glory of the

Father at the First Coming, it is with the same glory of the Father that Jesus will return, and it will be seen by men again.

Another passage relating the *Shechinah* Glory with the Second Coming is Matthew 24:30:

> *And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.*

According to this passage, just prior to the Second Coming, the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the heavens, and that sign will certainly be the *Shechinah* Glory, for the Son of man will come in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. Parallel passages are Mark 13:26 and Luke 21:27.

3. *The Millennium*

In prophecy, the greatest manifestation of the *Shechinah* Glory, especially to Israel, will be in the Messianic Kingdom. All together, there will be a total of five simultaneous manifestations of the *Shechinah* Glory.

First: there will exist a visible manifestation in the Holy of Holies of the Millennial Kingdom. Just as Ezekiel carefully plotted the departure of the *Shechinah* Glory from Israel, he also prophesied and recorded the future return of the *Shechinah* Glory in Ezekiel 43:1-7a:

> *Afterward he brought me to the gate, even the gate that looks toward the east: and, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east: and his voice was like the sound of many waters; and the earth shined with his glory. And it was according to the appearance of the vision which I saw, even according to the vision that I saw when I came to destroy the city; and the visions were like the vision that I saw by the river Chebar; and I fell upon my face. And the glory of Jehovah came into the house by the way of the gate whose prospect is toward the east. And the Spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court; and, behold, the glory of Jehovah filled the house. And I heard one speaking unto me out of the house; and a man stood by me. And he said unto me, Son of man, this is the place of my throne, and the place of the soles of*

> *my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever.*

In verses 1-3, the *Shechinah* Glory will come from the east, and the earth will shine from its light. To the east is the Mount of Olives from where the *Shechinah* Glory had departed. In other words, the *Shechinah* Glory will return from the very same direction it had departed. It will come through the eastern gate (v. 4) and enter the Holy of Holies of the Millennial Temple (v. 5). Just as the *Shechinah* Glory departed through the eastern gate, it will return through the eastern gate as well. Finally, Ezekiel points out that at this point the *Shechinah* Glory will make its permanent residence with Israel (vv. 6-7a). The Hebrew word for "I will dwell" is *eshkhan*, which comes from the same root as *Shechinah*. At long last, the prayers of Moses and Solomon will be answered.

According to Ezekiel 44:1-2, the eastern gate will be shut, never to be reopened again throughout the Millennium as a result of the return of the *Shechinah* Glory through the eastern gate:

> *Then he brought me back by the way of the outer gate of the sanctuary, which looks toward the east; and it was shut. And Jehovah said unto me, This gate shall be shut; it shall not be opened, neither shall any man enter in by it; for Jehovah, the God of Israel, has entered in by it; therefore it shall be shut.*

It should be pointed out that the gate Ezekiel is speaking of has nothing to do with the present Golden Gate on the present eastern wall of Jerusalem. Many of the more sensational prophecy buffs have tried to relate this passage to the present Golden Gate. But from the context this cannot be, and the present Golden Gate has nothing to do with the Ezekiel passage. The Ezekiel passage is speaking of the Millennial Temple Compound, which will have a totally different wall and gate altogether. Furthermore, this gate is shut because the *Shechinah* Glory will have reentered Israel through it, and the shutting of the gate symbolizes that the *Shechinah* Glory will not depart from Israel again. Regarding the present Golden Gate, the *Shechinah* Glory did not enter through it, nor did Jesus, since the present gate was built centuries after His time.

Second: not only will the *Shechinah* Glory be in the Holy of Holies of the Millennial Temple, it will also cover the entire new Mount Zion, according to Isaiah 4:5-6:

> *And Jehovah will create over the whole habitation of mount Zion, and over her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for over all the glory shall be spread a covering. And there shall be a pavilion for a shade in the daytime from the heat, and for a refuge and for a covert from storm and from rain.*

Here the *Shechinah* Glory is described as a *cloud* and *smoke* by day and the *shining of a flaming fire* by night. Over all the glory there is a covering giving protection from the heat, storm and rain. The new Mount Zion, described in various parts of the prophetic word, will be an exceedingly high mountain with a fifty-mile square plateau on top with the new City of Jerusalem on the south side and the Millennial Temple on the north side. But over this mountain will be the visible manifestation of the *Shechinah* Glory in a cloud and smoke and flaming fire, as it was over Mount Sinai and the Tabernacle during the Wilderness Wanderings.

Third: the *Shechinah* Glory will rest especially over and around Jerusalem, according to Zechariah 2:4-5:

> *And said unto him, Run, speak to this young man, saying, Jerusalem shall be inhabited as villages without walls, by reason of the multitude of men and cattle therein. For I, says Jehovah, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and I will be the glory in the midst of her.*

The prophet states that Jehovah will be a *wall of fire round about* Jerusalem, and that He will be the glory in the midst of her. These are all manifestations of the *Shechinah* Glory in relation to Jerusalem during the Millennial Kingdom.

Fourth: other passages show that the *Shechinah* Glory will be with all Israel and not merely in the Temple or Mount Zion or the City of Jerusalem. Isaiah 35:1-2 states:

> *The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon: they shall see the glory of Jehovah, the excellency of our God.*

The nations will see in Israel *the glory of Jehovah*.

This is brought out again in Isaiah 58:8-9a:

> *Then shall your light break forth as the morning, and your healing shall spring forth speedily; and your righteousness shall go before you; the glory of Jehovah shall be your rearward. Then shall you call, and Jehovah will answer; you shall cry, and he will say, Here I am.*

Concerning Israel, Isaiah said the *light* shall break forth as the morning and the *glory of Jehovah* shall be your rearward.

Also, in Isaiah 60:1-3 the prophet writes:

> *Arise, shine; for your light is come, and the glory of Jehovah is risen upon you. For, behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the peoples; but Jehovah will arise upon you, and his glory shall be seen upon you. And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.*

Verse one states that the glory of Jehovah is risen over Israel; in verse two, His glory shall be seen in Israel; in verse three, the Gentiles shall come to Israel's *brightness*.

The point of all these passages is that the *Shechinah* Glory will dwell in a visible manifestation with all Israel, and for the Gentile nations to experience this visible manifestation, they will have to come to the Jews (Zech. 8:20-23).

Fifth: the *Shechinah* Glory will also be seen in the visible reign of Jesus the Messiah. Isaiah 11:10 states:

> *And it shall come to pass in that day, that the root of Jesse, that stands for an ensign of the peoples, unto him shall the nations seek; and his restingplace shall be glorious.*

Also, in Isaiah 40:5:

> *And the glory of Jehovah shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of Jehovah has spoken it.*

Jesus will again be a visible manifestation of the *Shechinah* Glory in the form of the God-Man without the veiling, while other manifestations will be in the forms of cloud, fire and smoke. All of this will be related to Israel, for it is with Israel that the *Shechinah* Glory will dwell in every one of its manifestations.

4. The Eternal Order

The Millennium will only last one thousand years, and then history will enter the period of the Eternal Order. But here, too, the *Shechinah* Glory will be evident. In Revelation 21:1-3 John writes:

> *And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away; and the sea is no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of the throne saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his peoples, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.*

Verses 1-2 describe the New Jerusalem, but then verse three describes the new presence of God in Jerusalem: *the Tabernacle of God* will be *with men* and He will dwell with men. The word "dwell" is the Greek word *skeinei*, which means "to tabernacle." As it was with the Old Testament, in the Eternal Order the *Shechinah* Glory will tabernacle with men, although there will be no Tabernacle or Temple, *per se*.

Jerusalem will have the glory of God because of this "tabernacling" with men, according to Revelation 21:10-11:

> *And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God: her light was like unto a stone most precious, as it were a jasper stone, clear as crystal: . . .*

Since Jerusalem will have the glory of God because of God's dwelling with men, there will be certain results, according to Revelation 21:23-24:

> *And the city has no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine upon it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the lamp thereof is the Lamb. And the nations shall walk amidst the light thereof: and the kings of the earth bring their glory into it.*

Because the *Shechinah* Glory will be there, there will be no need of the natural light from the sun or the moon, nor the artificial light of the lamp.

The *Shechinah* Glory will provide all the light that will be necessary, and all the inhabitants will be able to walk in that light.

So it will be for all eternity.

APPENDIX V

The Olivet Discourse

The famous Olivet Discourse of the Messiah occurred between two significant events. Immediately preceding the Olivet Discourse, the Messiah spoke the final words of His public ministry, found in Matthew 23:1-39, which contains the denunciation of the leadership of Israel, especially for their guilt in leading the nation to reject the Messiahship of Jesus. With these words, the public ministry of the Messiah as a prophet came to an end, and for the remainder of His last few days on earth, He would deal exclusively with His disciples. In verses 37-39, Jesus also laid down the precondition to the Second Coming, in that He will not return until the Jewish leaders ask Him to return. Just as the Jewish leaders once led the nation to reject His Messiahship, a day must come when they will lead the Jewish people to accept His Messiahship.

Immediately after the Olivet Discourse came the preparation of the last Passover and the first Lord's Supper. These events came just before His death. During the last Passover and the first Lord's Supper, the famous Upper Room Discourse occurred, in which there was a transition in the Messiah's ministry from prophet to priest.

Between these two significant events is the famous Olivet Discourse recorded by three of the Gospel writers: Matthew 24-25; Mark 13; and Luke 21:5-36. The basic purpose of the Olivet Discourse is to answer the question: When and how would the Messianic Kingdom come into being? Since Israel rejected the Kingdom offer of the Messiah, it was impossible to set up the Kingdom at that time, and it would have to be set up at a later time. However, in light of His denunciation of the leadership of Israel in Matthew 23, and in light of His closing words in Matthew 23:37-39 revealing the fact that He will not return until Israel requests His return, what will be the circumstances that will cause this to happen? When, then, will the Kingdom be set up? The Olivet Discourse answers this question.

To get a complete picture, all three Gospel accounts must be studied. Not one Gospel writer recorded everything Jesus said on that day, and each one recorded only the information most relevant to the theme of his own Gospel account. For that reason, it is necessary to study all three accounts, because only then is it possible to get a total picture of what Jesus said during the closing days in His office as prophet. This study will be in the form of a synthesis, with all three Gospel accounts being examined simultaneously.

The basic presentation of the Olivet Discourse is chronological; if Jesus breaks the chronological order, He indicates it in some way.

A. *The Historical Setting—Matthew 24:1-2; Mark 13:1-2; Luke 21:5-6*

The Matthew account reads:

> *And Jesus went out from the temple, and was going on his way; and his disciples came to him to show him the buildings of the temple. But he answered and said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.*

After His scathing denunciation of the Pharisees, and after announcing the coming destruction of the Temple, Jesus and His disciples left the Temple Compound for the last time during His lifetime. On the way out, the disciples pointed to the magnificent buildings of the Jewish Temple Compound. Actually, at that time, the Temple buildings were not yet completed. The Temple Compound was begun by Herod the Great in 20 B.C., but it was not finished until A.D. 64, only six years before its destruction. The words of the Olivet Discourse were spoken in the year A.D. 30, and so the building of the Temple Compound had been going on for fifty years. They would continue the building for another 34 years. The stones which so impressed the disciples were indeed magnificent, and some of them are still visible in the walls of the Temple Compound to this day. These "Herodian Stones" are huge, each measuring ten to twelve feet in length and

weighing several tons.

Nevertheless, Jesus reiterated the fact that this Temple was doomed to destruction, and the Temple itself would not have one stone left upon another, that would not be thrown down. This prophecy of the Messiah was literally fulfilled in A.D. 70 when the Romans destroyed the City of Jerusalem, and the Temple was set on fire. Because there was so much gold in the building, a great amount of it melted and the liquid gold seeped into the crevices between the stones of the Temple. When the ruins cooled down, the Romans systematically removed everything, stone by stone, in order to get to the gold that had solidified inside the crevices.

However, this prophecy of the Messiah left the disciples perplexed.

B. The Three Questions— Matthew 24:3; Mark 13:3-4; Luke 21:7

The second section concerns the perplexity of the disciples with the prophecy of the Messiah. When they arrived at the Mount of Olives, the prophecy raised three questions on the part of four of His disciples. The Matthew account reads as follows:

> *And as he sat on the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of your coming, and of the end of the world?*

The Luke account reads:

> *And they asked him, saying, Teacher, when therefore shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when these things are about to come to pass?*

All together, three questions were asked which, at the same time, included requests for three signs.

The first question in the Matthew passage was: *Tell us, when shall these things be? These things* refer to the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple that He had prophesied in the previous two verses. In the Luke passage, this first question is phrased as: *Teacher, when therefore shall these things be?*

and what shall be the sign when these things are about to come to pass? The first question was: "When will Jerusalem and the Temple be destroyed, and what will be the sign that this is about to take place?"

The second question was: *What shall be the sign of your coming?* This question did not concern the Rapture of the Church because the Rapture is imminent and can happen at any moment, having no warning sign preceding it. However, the Second Coming will be preceded by a sign, and the disciples asked what the sign would be.

The third question was: *What shall be the sign of the end of the world?* The Greek word translated *world* actually means "age." They asked for a third sign, and that was: "What will be the sign that the end of this age has begun?" In rabbinic theology of that day, the rabbis spoke of two ages: *this age*, in which we now live; and *the age to come*, the Messianic Age. The question is: "What is the sign that the last days of this age have begun and that will lead to the Messianic Age?"

All together, then, there were three questions in which the disciples asked for three signs to watch for. Jesus answered these questions, but not in the same order as they were asked. He answered the third question first, the first question second, and the second question third. Nor are all three answers found in all three accounts. While Matthew and Mark recorded the answers to the second and third questions, they ignored the answer to the first question. It is Luke who recorded the Messiah's answer to the first question.

C. The General Characteristics of the Church Age—*Matthew 24:4-6; Mark 13:6-7; Luke 21:8-9*

Before the Messiah began to answer the third question, first, He began by answering the question negatively by providing some general characteristics of the Church Age which are not signs. The Matthew passage reads as follows:

> *And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man lead you astray. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am the Christ; and shall lead many astray. And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars; see that ye be not troubled: for these things must needs to come to pass; but the end is not yet.*

Rather than immediately answering all three questions, Jesus decided first to give some general characteristics of the Church Age, part of "this age," none of which meant that the end has begun. Jesus wanted to make sure that the disciples would not jump to certain conclusions because of various events, and so He first answered the question negatively, telling them of things that would not mean that the end has begun. There were to be two general characteristics of the Church Age.

1. The Rise of False Messiahs

The first general characteristic of the Church Age would be the rise of false messiahs. Historically, Jesus was the first Person Who claimed to be the Messiah. After Him, many came claiming to be the messiah. From the time of Jesus until about the middle of the 1850s, a great number of Jewish men—from Simon Bar Cochba to Sabbetal Tzvi and Jacob Frank—arose claiming to be the messiah, and indeed led many astray. Gentiles have also claimed the messianic title. But this was to be a general characteristic of the Church Age, and the existence of false messiahs in no way meant that the end had begun.

2. The Existence of Local Wars

The second general characteristic would be local wars. Jesus stated that when they heard of *wars and rumors of wars*, these things also would not be signs of the end. The existence of local wars here and there would in no way indicate that the end had begun. Even if such local wars take place in the Middle East, it is not necessarily prophetically significant.

3. Conclusion

Concerning both false messiahs and local wars, in verse six, Jesus said: *for all these things must needs to come to pass; but the end is not yet* (Mat. 24:6). Luke emphasized this point in his passage when he wrote: *for these things must needs to come to pass first; but the end is not immediately* (Lk. 21:9). In other words, the rise of false messiahs and long periods of local wars will necessarily come first. But neither of these things would in any way, shape, or form be signs that the end had begun.

D. The Sign of the End of the Age—Matthew 24:7-8; Mark 13:8; Luke 21:10-11

Having provided for His disciples certain characteristics that would in no way indicate that the end had begun, Jesus next proceeded to answer the third question positively, giving the one sign that the end of the age had truly begun. The Matthew account reads:

> *For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines and earthquakes in divers places. But all these things are the beginning of travail.*

According to all three Gospel writers, the sign of the end of the age is said to be when *nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.* This act will be coupled with *famines and earthquakes* in various places, and then Jesus clearly stated that this would be *the beginning of travail*. The term *travail* means "birth pang." It refers to the series of birth pangs that a woman undergoes before giving birth to a baby. The prophets pictured the last days as a series of birth pangs before the birth of the new Messianic Age. The *beginning of travail*, or the first birth pang, and the sign that the end of the age has begun is when nation rises against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. Jesus had already clearly stated that local wars between a few nations would not indicate that the end had begun. But then He said that when there is "nation against nation, and kingdom against kingdom," this will mean the end of the age has begun.

To understand what the idiom "nation against nation, and kingdom against kingdom" means, it is necessary to return to the Jewish origin of these statements, and this has been discussed in an earlier part of this work.[1] This expression is a Hebrew idiom for a world war. Jesus' statement here is that when a world war occurs, rather than merely a local war, that world war would signal that the end of the age had begun.

This is quite in keeping with the Jewish writings of this same period. One Jewish source known as the *Zohar Chadash* states:

> *At that time wars shall be stirred up in the world. Nation shall be against nation and city against city; much distress*

[1] See Chapter 4, The Sequence of Pretribulational Events.

> *shall be renewed against the enemies of the Israelites.*

Another Jewish source known as the *Bereshit Rabbah* states:

> *If you shall see the kingdoms rising against each other in turn, then give heed and note the footsteps of the Messiah* (XLII:4).

The rabbis clearly taught that a worldwide conflict would signal the coming of the Messiah. Jesus corrected this idea slightly, for He said that when the world war occurs, while it does not signal the coming of the Messiah, it will signal that the end of the age has begun. These birth pangs that Jesus talked about are the same as the "footsteps" that the rabbis talked about. The "footsteps of the Messiah" had to do with the series of events that will lead up to the coming of the Messiah. This Jewish concept is reflected in the Matthew account concerning "nation against nation, kingdom against kingdom."

World War I (1914-1918) was the fulfillment of this particular prophecy, for that was the first world war. As virtually all historians agree, World War II was merely a continuation of World War I. Furthermore, both world wars had a decisive impact on Jewish history. World War I gave impetus to the growth of the Zionist movement, and World War II led to the reestablishment of the Jewish State. Since World War I, history has entered the last days of the Church Age. However, the last days are an extended period of time.

The sign that the end of the age has begun is the worldwide conflict fulfilled by World War I and World War II.[2]

E. Personal Experiences of the Apostles—Mark 13:9-13; Luke 21:12-19

Having provided an answer to the third question regarding the sign of the end of the age, the Messiah then turned back to His own time to spell out some of the personal experiences that the Apostles would have to undergo. The Luke account reads:

---

[2] Concerning the issue of earthquakes and famine, see Chapter 4, The Sequence of Pretribulational Events.

> *But before all these things, they shall lay their hands on you, and shall persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons, bringing you before kings and governors for my name's sake. It shall turn out unto you for a testimony. Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate beforehand how to answer: for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to withstand or to gainsay. But ye shall be delivered up even by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolk, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. And not a hair of your head shall perish. In your patience ye shall win your souls.*

As stated earlier, the presentation is generally chronological, but when it is not, it is somehow indicated. The Luke account clearly states that what is about to be described is going to occur *before* the sign that the end of the age has begun, as the passage begins with the phrase, *But before all these things.* So before there is the sign of the end of the age, before the sign of "nation against nation, kingdom against kingdom" ever comes, the Apostles themselves will undergo certain experiences. Jesus then described some personal experiences that the Apostles were to go through after He departed from them. All together, He listed nine things: *first*, they will be rejected by the Jews (v. 12a); *second*, they will be rejected by the Gentiles (v. 12b); *third*, they will undergo persecutions, but these persecutions will provide opportunities for testimony (v. 13); *fourth*, they will succeed in proclaiming the gospel everywhere (Mk. 13:10), verified by Romans 10:18 and Colossians 1:6, 23; *fifth*, they need not worry about preparing defenses before their trials, because they will be given divine utterance when they are brought before judgment (vv. 14-15); *sixth*, they will be rejected by their own family members (v. 16); *seventh*, they will be hated by all men to the point that some will be martyred (v. 17); *eighth*, nevertheless, their salvation is assured (v. 18); and *ninth*, they will succeed in winning many souls (v. 19).

That the Apostles did, indeed, experience all these things is well known both from the Book of Acts and from other historical records that trace the activities of the Apostles beyond that which is recorded in the Book of Acts. While the Messiah had already answered their third question concerning

the sign of the end of the age, before proceeding to answer their other two questions, He chose to predict some of the personal experiences that they would have to undergo before the sign of the end of the age would come. They were not to expect the end of the age to come too soon. In fact, Jesus predicted that many of them would be martyred before the end of the age ever begins.

F. The Sign of the Fall of Jerusalem—Luke 21:20-24

Only after having spelled out clearly that the Apostles would have to undergo a period of suffering as well as have a successful ministry did Jesus go on to answer their first question concerning the sign of the coming destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple. The answer is recorded only by Luke:

> *But when ye see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that her desolation is at hand. Then let them that are in Judaea flee unto the mountains; and let them that are in the midst of her depart out; and let not them that are in the country enter therein. For these are days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. Woe unto them that are with child and to them that give suck in those days! for there shall be great distress upon the land, and wrath unto this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led captive into all the nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.*

In answer to their first question, the Messiah gave them the sign that would mark the fact that Jerusalem was about to be destroyed. The sign was the surrounding of the City of Jerusalem by armies. The Jewish believers were told that, when they saw this sign, they were to leave Jerusalem and Judea and flee outside the Land. This sign would mark the coming desolation of Jerusalem, and Jerusalem, from that point on, will be continually *trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.*

This prophecy was fulfilled in a very marvelous way. In the year A.D. 66, the first Jewish revolt broke out against the Romans. When the

revolt first began, the Roman general in the Land, Cestus Gallus, came with his armies from Caesarea and surrounded Jerusalem. The surrounding of the city marked the sign that Jesus had promised, and the Jewish believers knew that Jerusalem would soon be destroyed. Jesus had commanded the Jewish believers to desert the city when they saw this happening. However, it was impossible to do so while the Romans were surrounding the city. Then Cestus Gallus noticed that his supply lines were not secure. He did not have enough supplies to maintain an extended siege, so he lifted the siege of Jerusalem in order to go back to Caesarea. On the way, he was attacked by Jewish forces and killed. Temporarily, the city was no longer surrounded by the armies, so every single Jewish believer was able to leave Jerusalem. They crossed the Jordan River and set up a new community of Jewish believers in the town of Pella in the Transjordan. They were joined by Jewish believers from Judea, Galilee, and the Golan. There they waited for the prophecy of Jesus to be fulfilled. In the year A.D. 68, a new Roman general by the name of Vespasian and his son, Titus, again besieged the city, and in the year A.D. 70, the city and the Temple were destroyed. All together, 1,100,000 Jews were killed in this final onslaught, but not one Jewish believer died because they obeyed the words of their Messiah. Since that time, Jerusalem has indeed been *trodden down of the Gentiles* and continues to be so to the present day. Jerusalem will not be free of Gentile nations treading upon her until the Messiah returns.

With these words, the Messiah answered their first question, the sign of the coming destruction of Jerusalem. That left one more question to be answered.

G. The Great Tribulation— Matthew 24:9-28; Mark 13:14-23

In preparation for answering the second question, the Messiah turned to the Great Tribulation itself. In this section, the Messiah spoke of the events of both the first half and the second half of the Tribulation.

1. The Events of the First Half of the Tribulation— Matthew 24:9-14

> *Then shall they deliver you up unto tribulation, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all the nations for my name's sake. And then shall many stumble, and shall deliver up one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall arise, and shall lead many astray. And because iniquity shall be multiplied, the love of the many shall wax cold. But he that endures to the end, the same shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony unto all the nations; and then shall the end come.*

Although these verses are very similar to those recorded in Mark 13:9-13 and Luke 21:12-19, the differences show that Matthew is not dealing with the same thing. Luke clearly stated that the events he was describing came *before* the sign of the end of the age, when "nation shall rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom." However, in the Matthew account, the passage begins with the word *Then*, pointing out that the Messiah is now describing what will come *after* the event of nation rising up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. While the words tend to be similar, these similarities do not prove sameness. Mark and Luke described events that will happen to the Apostles *before* the sign of the first world war, while Matthew dealt with events of the first half of the Tribulation that would come *after* the sign of the first world war.

All together, the Messiah pointed out five events that will occur during the first half of the Tribulation. First, there will be tremendous persecution of the saints (vv. 9-10), a fact also given in Revelation 6:9-11. The one-world religious system, known as Ecclesiastical Babylon, will be doing the persecuting and will be responsible for the death of the saints during the first half of the Tribulation (Rev. 17:1-6).

Second, the first half of the Tribulation will be characterized by the rise of many false prophets (v. 11). This point is also brought out in Zechariah 13:2-6.

Third, there will be a tremendous rise of sin and iniquity (v. 12), because evil will no longer be restrained (II Thes. 2:6-7).

Fourth, those Jews who survive to the end of the Tribulation will be saved (v. 13).

The fifth event of the first half of the Tribulation will be the worldwide preaching of the gospel (v. 14), which will be conducted by the 144,000

Jews of Revelation 7:1-8. The results of the ministry of the 144,000 are recorded in Revelation 7:9-17, where it clearly states that *a great multitude* of Gentiles will come to the saving knowledge of our Lord Jesus the Messiah.

2. The Events of the Second Half of the Tribulation—Matthew 24:15-28; Mark 13:14-23

Having given some events of the first half of the Tribulation, the Messiah next turned to the events of the second half. The Matthew account reads:

> *When therefore ye see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let him that reads understand), then let them that are in Judaea flee unto the mountains: let him that is on the housetop not go down to take out the things that are in his house: and let him that is in the field not return back to take his cloak. But woe unto them that are with child and to them that give suck in those days! And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on a sabbath: for then shall be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days had been shortened, no flesh would have been saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened. Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is the Christ, or, Here; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect. Behold, I have told you beforehand. If therefore they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the wilderness; go not forth: Behold, he is in the inner chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning comes forth from the east, and is seen even unto the west; so shall be the coming of the Son of man. Wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.*

Concerning the events of the second half of the Tribulation, all together, the Messiah said eight things.

First: the Messiah dealt with the specific event that will mark the

beginning of the second half of the Tribulation: the Abomination of Desolation *standing in the holy place* (v. 15). The Abomination of Desolation will involve two stages. The *first* stage will be when the Antichrist will take over the Jewish Temple, sit down in the Holy of Holies, and declare himself to be god (II Thes. 2:3-10). The *second* stage of the Abomination of Desolation will be when the False Prophet will make an image of the Antichrist and stand it up in the Holy of Holies (Rev. 13:11-15; Dan. 12:11). This act of the Abomination of Desolation will signal that the second and worse half of the Tribulation has begun.

Second: the Abomination of Desolation will be the signal for the Jews to flee out of the Land (vv. 16-20); this flight is also recorded in Revelation 12:13-17. This passage reflects a sense of urgency in Israel's flight. In fact, the whole emphasis is on speed and quickness. This emphasis is especially evident in the Messiah's listing of the three difficulties that may be encountered in this flight. The *first* difficulty is for women who are pregnant or have infants. In both cases, this makes quick flight difficult as any woman in that condition can certainly verify. The *second* difficulty is in relation to the winter, when weather conditions can also limit a speedy escape especially through *wadis* such as the one leading to Petra. The *third* difficulty is in relation to the Sabbath, a day when all public transportation closes down. For these two reasons, they are advised to pray that this Abomination of Desolation, which will indeed come to pass, will not come on the Sabbath day or during the winter months, during the rainy season.

Third: the reason for this flight (v. 21) is because at this time worldwide anti-Semitism will break out in all its fierceness. Satan's attempt to annihilate the Jews once and for all will have begun in earnest.

Fourth: Israel will survive this terrible period, though greatly reduced in number (v. 22).

Fifth: the second half of the Tribulation will be characterized by a false messiah, as typified in the counterfeit son, the Antichrist (v. 23).

Sixth: the latter half of the Tribulation will be characterized by many false signs, miracles and wonders, for the purpose of worldwide deception. These false signs will be performed by both the Antichrist (II Thes. 2:8-10) and by the False Prophet (Rev. 13:11-15).

Seventh: the Messiah warned that there will be people saying that the Messiah has returned here or that the Messiah has returned

there, and that the Second Coming has secretly occurred (vv. 25-27). The Messiah warned the Jews of that day not to believe any such rumor or statement and come out of hiding because, unlike His First Coming, the Second Coming will not be in secret. When the Messiah returns the second time, all men will see it, for it will be like a flash of lightning surrounding the world.

Eighth: the Messiah gave a hint as to the place of His Second Coming in verse 28. He said that where the body is, there will the eagles (better translated as "vultures") *be gathered together*. The "body" refers to Israel, while the "vultures" refer to the Gentile nations coming against the body of Israel. The place of the Second Coming of the Messiah will be in that place where the body of Israel is located, and where the Gentile nations are *gathered together*. The exact place is known as *Bozrah* (in Hebrew) or *Petra* (in Greek). That is where the "body" will be (Mic. 2:12-13); that is where the "vultures" will be gathered to come against them (Is. 34:1-7; 63:1-6); and that will be the place of the Second Coming (Hab. 3:3).

To summarize, in this passage, the Messiah presented the events of the second half of the Tribulation, showing it to be an especially difficult period for Israel which will culminate in the Second Coming of the Messiah. But He has not yet answered the second question that concerned the sign that will signal the Messiah's Second Coming.

H. The Sign of the Second Coming of the Messiah—Matthew 24:29-30; Mark 13:24-26; Luke 21:25-27

The Matthew account reads:

> *But immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.*

The Luke account reads:

> *And there shall be signs in sun and moon and stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, in perplexity for the roaring of the sea and the billows; men fainting for fear, and for expectation of the things which are coming on the world: for the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.*

In the Matthew account, Jesus stated that just preceding the sign of the Second Coming of the Messiah, there will be a total blackout of the earth. No light will penetrate to the earth from the sun , the moon, and the stars (Mat. 24:29). Luke adds that there will be a great amount of *perplexity* on the earth as both physical and non-physical things are shaken in *expectation* (Lk. 21:25-26).

At this point, Matthew states that the sign *of the Son of man* will appear (v. 30a). As this sign is coupled with God's glory, it is obviously the *Shechinah* Glory light that will signal the Second Coming of the Messiah. The answer to the second question, "What will be the sign of the Second Coming?" is: the *Shechinah* Glory. *But immediately after the tribulation of those days*, there will be a total blackout with no light penetrating at all, followed by a sudden, glorious, tremendous light that will disperse the blackness. This *Shechinah* light will be the sign of the Second Coming of the Messiah. The light will be followed by the return of the Messiah Himself (v. 30b).

The Messiah had now answered all three questions. The sign of the destruction of the Jewish Temple was to be the surrounding of Jerusalem by armies. The sign that the end of the age had begun was to be a worldwide war. The sign of the Second Coming would be the *Shechinah* Glory light breaking through the worldwide blackout. The *first* sign was given in A.D. 66; the *second* sign was given in 1914-1918; and at the end of the Tribulation, the *third* sign will be given as well.

Although Jesus had answered all three questions, He still wished to give more information regarding the last days.

I. The Regathering of Israel— Matthew 24:31; Mark 13:27

Since the Jewish prophets had predicted in great detail the worldwide

regathering of Israel, Jesus did not spend much time with this, but only specified that it will occur after His Second Coming. The Matthew account reads:

> *And he shall send forth his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.*

The Mark passage reads:

> *And then shall he send forth the angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.*

Following the Second Coming, the Messiah will send *his angels* all over the world to regather every Jew and bring them back into their Land. The background to the Matthew passage is Isaiah 27:12-13, which prophesied that the final restoration of Israel will be signaled by the sound of a great trumpet. The background to the Mark passage is Deuteronomy 30:4, which also emphasizes that the final restoration will come from two localities: earth and Heaven. Those who are gathered from *the uttermost parts of the earth* will be living in Israel, the one-third Remnant that survives the Tribulation. Those who are gathered from *the uttermost part of heaven* will be the resurrected Old Testament saints. This part of the Olivet Discourse summarizes many Old Testament prophecies (*e.g.*, Is. 11:11-12:6; 43:5-7; Jer. 23:5-8; 31:7-14; Ezek. 11:16-21; 20:40-42; 36:22-31, *et. al.*), specifying that the final worldwide restoration will come only after the Second Coming, and not before.

J. The Exhortation—Luke 21:28

Having given an outline of things to come from their own day until the beginning of the Kingdom, the Messiah then presented an exhortation:

> *But when these things begin to come to pass, look up, and lift up your heads; because your redemption draws nigh.*

The exhortation is that when believers see *these things begin to come to pass,* then they are to look up—raise their heads—because it will mark the imminent redemption of the believers from this world. In Luke's context, the expression *these things* refers back to Luke 21:20-24, which was the sign

of the destruction of Jerusalem. Once Jerusalem was destroyed in A.D. 70, that fulfilled every and any prophecy that had to be fulfilled before the Rapture. Once the city and the Temple were destroyed, it fulfilled the judgment for the unpardonable sin. Once that happened, it rendered the Rapture of the Church imminent. "Imminency" does not mean "soon." It only means that it can now happen at any moment of time. It should be noted what Jesus did *not* say. He did not say, "Only when *all* these things have come to pass, then look up, for your redemption draws nigh." He did not say we must wait until the end of the Tribulation before looking up. What He did say was, "When you see these things *begin* to come to pass, then look up, for your redemption draws nigh." The beginning part was the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple. Once the beginning had occurred, the Rapture became imminent.

K. The Parable of the Fig Tree—Matthew 24:32-35; Mark 13:28-32; Luke 21:29-33

The Matthew account reads:

> *Now from the fig tree learn her parable: when her branch is now become tender, and puts forth its leaves, ye know that the summer is nigh; even so ye also, when ye see all these things, know ye that he is nigh, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all these things be accomplished. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.*

The Luke account reads:

> *And he spoke to them a parable: Behold the fig tree, and all the trees: when they now shoot forth, ye see it and know of your own selves that the summer is now nigh. Even so ye also, when ye see these things coming to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all things be accomplished. Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.*

This section has often been misused by those who have attempted

to date the Rapture or the Second Coming of the Messiah. The *fig tree* is often taken to mean the reestablishment of the State of Israel in 1948. Then, within a generation, that is forty years from 1948, the Second Coming must occur. This would place the Second Coming in 1988. Because the Rapture precedes the Second Coming by at least seven years, it would place the Rapture by 1981. This is simply date-setting—something the Scriptures clearly forbid. Nevertheless, date-setters continue to revise their 1981 "prophecy" year after year. Since 1988 has now come and gone, the new focus is to start the forty years with the Six-Day War in 1967. So now some are predicting the return of the Lord around 2006-2007.

There are two errors in this type of reasoning and its exposition. *First*, the Bible nowhere limits the period of a *generation* to simply forty years. The one place where the term "generation" is given a specific length of time, it is reckoned to be one hundred years (Gen. 15:13-16). Actually, the term "generation" can mean twenty, forty, seventy, eighty and one hundred years. Sometimes it simply means "contemporaries," much as that term is used today. That is the way it is used here. The *second* mistake made in this reasoning is assuming that the *fig tree* is a symbol of Israel and that this passage is speaking of the reestablishment of the Jewish State in 1948. This has not been mentioned anywhere in the entire Olivet Discourse. The reestablishment of Israel has merely been assumed and presupposed in the passage, but it has never been dealt with specifically. Furthermore, the usual scriptural symbol for Israel is the vine.

However, the real point of this passage is that the *fig tree* is being used *literally* as an *illustration*, not as a symbol for Israel. This is clearly seen from verse 29 of the Luke passage, which reads: *Behold the fig tree, and all the trees.* If the *fig tree* represents Israel, what, then, do all the other trees represent? If they refer to other nations, and since a number of nations have risen—and keep rising—since 1948, then when would the forty-year countdown really begin? Neither the *fig tree* nor the other trees are used symbolically to refer to any nation or nations; rather, they are being used literally as an illustration.

The point of the illustration is this: When the *fig tree* and all the other trees begin to blossom, it is a sure sign that summer is on its way, because the blossoming occurs in the spring. Then, in application of the illustration, Jesus said: *Even so ye also, when ye see all these things,*

know ye that he is nigh, even at the doors. Just as a blossoming fig tree means that summer is on its way, in the same way, when these events that Jesus spoke about occur, then they can know that His return is near.

But what is it that signals the soon return of the Lord? It is not the reestablishment of Israel in 1948, because Jesus never mentioned that event in this passage. Rather, the event that He was speaking of was the Abomination of Desolation. When the Abomination of Desolation occurs, it will signal the soon return of the Messiah, namely, only 3½ years later. More specifically, from the Prophet Daniel, whom Jesus specifically named, they would know that it will be exactly 1,260 days from the Abomination of Desolation until the Second Coming.

Then Jesus stated that the *generation* which sees this event—the Abomination of Desolation—will still be around when the Second Coming of the Messiah occurs 3½ years later. The point of verse 34 is not that the *generation* that sees the reestablishment of the Jewish State will still be here at the Second Coming, but rather, the Jewish *generation* that sees the Abomination of Desolation will still be here at the Second Coming. Verse 34 is intended to be a word of comfort in light of the worldwide attempt at Jewish destruction. It must be kept in mind that the Abomination of Desolation signals Satan's and the Antichrist's final attempt to exterminate the Jews. The fact that the Jewish *generation* will still be here when the Second Coming of the Messiah occurs shows that Satan's attempt toward Jewish destruction will fail, and the Jewish saints of the second half of the Tribulation can receive comfort from these words.

The "coming" referred to in this passage is not the Rapture, for which no signs are promised, but the Second Coming itself. This is evident from the Luke account, for he states that what the Abomination of Desolation signals is the coming of the Kingdom of God. The Millennial Kingdom will be a result of the Second Coming, not of the Rapture.

Again, the point of this section is not that the *fig tree* represents Israel in 1948, but rather, the *fig tree* is being used literally as an illustration. The point of the illustration is to provide a word of comfort that the worldwide attempt to destroy the Jews is destined for failure, for the Jewish generation that sees the Abomination of Desolation will still be around when the Messiah returns.

L. The Rapture of the Church—Matthew 24:36-42; Luke 21:34-36

Now the passage turns to the issue of the Rapture of the Church, the timing of which cannot be known in advance. The Matthew account reads:

> *But of that day and hour knows no one, not even the angels of heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only. And as were the days of Noah, so shall be the coming of the Son of man. For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and they knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall be the coming of the Son of man. Then shall two men be in the field; one is taken, and one is left: two women shall be grinding at the mill; one is taken, and one is left. Watch therefore: for ye know not on what day your Lord comes.*

Luke's version reads:

> *But take heed to yourselves, lest haply your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that day come on you suddenly as a snare: for so shall it come upon all them that dwell on the face of all the earth. But watch ye at every season, making supplication, that ye may prevail to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.*

Within premillennial and pretribulational circles, the majority view today is that this passage is speaking of the Second Coming rather than the Rapture. Two main reasons are given. *First*: contextually, Jesus has been speaking about the Second Coming and since this passage follows that discussion, then, logically, it would mean that He is speaking of the same thing. *Second*: the "taking away" of Matthew 24:40-41 is taken to be the same as verse 39, which is a "taking away" in judgment. Hence, the "taking away" is in judgment at the Second Coming, and not the blessing of the Rapture.

In answer to the *first* point, Matthew 24:36 begins with the word

But, which in Greek is *peri de*. The *peri de* construction in Greek is a contrastive introduction of a new subject and, hence, is often translated as: *But concerning* (I Cor. 7:1; 8:1; 12:1; 16:1; I Thes. 5:1; etc.). The usage of this construction points to the introduction of a new subject. So yes, He has been discussing the Second Coming until this point. However, the *peri de* means that He is now introducing a new subject, and that is the Rapture. This would not be the first time the chronological sequence of the Olivet Discourse was broken to speak of an earlier event. It also happened in Luke 21:12. In answer to the *second* point, in Greek, the "taking away" in verses 40-41 is a different Greek word than the one used in verse 39, and so it need not be interpreted as the same kind of "taking away." Other reasons for taking this passage as a Rapture event are given below.

Concerning the issue of the Rapture, the Messiah makes four main points. First, in verse 36, as to the question of *when*: this is known only by one Person, and that is God the Father. It is not known by the angels, nor was it known by the Son in His humanity, but only by God the Father. If the timing of the Rapture has been hidden from both angels and the humanity of Jesus, how much more so is it hidden from mankind in general! For that reason, the only clue given concerning the timing of the Rapture is that it will occur some time before the Tribulation, and it may not necessarily occur just before the Tribulation. It might easily occur ten or twenty years before that time. As to the question of when the Rapture will occur, the answer is simple: no one knows. This is not true of the Second Coming of the Messiah, which will some day be a datable event. It will occur exactly seven years after the signing of the seven-year covenant and 3½ years (42 months or 1,260 days) after the Abomination of Desolation.

Second: there will not be any signs preceding the Rapture (vv. 37-39) as there will be signs preceding the Second Coming. When the Rapture occurs, it will happen while there are normal conditions on the earth. The Flood also came while there were normal conditions on the earth, while men *were eating, and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage*. None of these things are sinful, but are necessary for human survival and propagation. While normal conditions existed on earth, the Noahic Flood arrived and swept them all away. In the same way, while there are normal conditions on the earth, the Rapture will suddenly occur, sweeping away all believers (vv. 40-41). This will not be true of the Second Coming. When that event

occurs, conditions on earth will be far from normal, as earlier sections of the Olivet Discourse and the Book of Revelation clearly show.

Third: when it comes, it will mean a separation (vv. 40-42). According to the key Rapture passages discussed in the main body of the book (Jn. 14:1-3; I Cor. 15:50-58; I Thes. 4:13-18), it will be a separation of the believer from the unbeliever.

Fourth: there is the supplication to *watch* (Lk. 21:34-36) for the purpose of escaping the Tribulation. Throughout the Olivet Discourse, to *watch* means "to be ready." Watching is the equivalent of readiness, and readiness is equivalent to salvation. So the means of escaping the Tribulation is by means of salvation. Only those who accept the Messiah before the Rapture of the Church can be ready and watching.

Luke gives two reasons for watching. *First*: that believers may *escape all these things that shall come to pass* during the Tribulation. What Luke states should not be missed. He points out that the Tribulation will *come upon all them that dwell on the face of all the earth* (v. 35). In other words, no one living on the earth can escape the effects of the Tribulation. It will fall upon *all* earth-dwellers. Luke also states there is a possibility to *prevail to escape all these things that shall come to pass* (v. 36). This is not possible if one is *on* the earth. Hence, to escape *all these things*, one must be *off* the earth. *Second*: that the believer might *stand before the Son of man* in Heaven. This will be the result of the Rapture: we *stand before the Son of man* and by standing before Him, we escape *all these things*. Both of these things can only be accomplished by the Rapture, and that is why to *watch* is to be saved.

M. *Parables Urging Watchfulness, Readiness, and Laboring— Matthew 24:43-25:30; Mark 13:33-37*

In order to reinforce His closing point in the previous section, the Messiah presented five parables, all having as their main point the urging of watchfulness, readiness, and laboring. In all these parables, the distinctions are not between different kinds of believers, but between believers and unbelievers. They express differences of attitude in believers and unbelievers toward the Second

Coming, not the Rapture; the former will be ready, while the latter will not.

In the parabolic method of teaching, a parable or a series of parables are given and then the application is made. The application of these parables will be made to the judgment of the sheep and goats.

1. The Parable of the Porter—Mark 13:33-37

> *Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. It is as when a man, sojourning in another country, having left his house, and given authority to his servants, to each one his work, commanded also the porter to watch. Watch therefore: for ye know not when the lord of the house comes, whether at even, or at midnight, or at cockcrowing, or in the morning; lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.*

The first parable emphasizes *watchfulness*, and He used the term *watch* four times. This parable refers to the Second Coming. The phrase, *for ye know not when the time is*, is further clarified by the phrase, *whether at even, or at midnight, or at cockcrowing, or in the morning*. Although the day of the Second Coming will be known once the Tribulation starts, the *time* of the day is not.

The main point of this parable is the emphasis on the *watching* for the Lord's return. As was already noted, watching is always in the sense of readiness, and readiness is always in the sense of salvation; only those who are saved are going to be able to escape these things.

2. The Parable of the Master of the House—Matthew 24:43-44

> *But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what watch the thief was coming, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken through. Therefore be ye also ready; for in an hour that ye think not the Son of man comes.*

The emphasis of the second parable is on *readiness*: *therefore be ye also ready*. Again, being ready can only be obtained by means of salvation.

3. The Parable of the Faithful Servant and the Evil Servant— Matthew 24:45-51

> *Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his lord has set over his household, to give them their food in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he comes shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, that he will set him over all that he has. But if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord tarries; and shall begin to beat his fellow-servants, and shall eat and drink with the drunken; the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he expects not, and in an hour when he knows not, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth.*

The emphasis of the third parable is on *laboring*. In order to make sure that the believers do not misconstrue the previous emphasis on watching as meaning, "just to sit there and look at the sky," the third parable emphasizes the necessity of working while one is waiting. When the Messiah returns, it will be while believers are busy laboring. The believer will be found laboring, but the unbeliever will be found not laboring. What this "laboring" entails will be discussed in the application of the parables.

Again, the parable refers to believers and unbelievers and to the Second Coming. The phrase, *a day when he expects not*, refers to the unbeliever who is not expecting the Second Coming. The next two parables provide a more extended treatment of the emphasis of the first three parables.

4. The Parable of the Ten Virgins—Matthew 25:1-13

> *Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, who took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were foolish, and five were wise. For the foolish, when they took their lamps, took no oil with them: but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. Now while the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. But at midnight there is a cry, Behold, the bridegroom! Come ye forth to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said*

> *unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are going out. But the wise answered, saying, Peradventure there will not be enough for us and you: go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went away to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage feast: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know not the day nor the hour.*

The emphasis of the fourth parable is on both watchfulness (*watch therefore*) and readiness (*they that were ready*). The *virgins* represent neither the Church nor Israel in this parable, but simply serve to illustrate a point. From the Old Testament, the contrast of the wise and the foolish is a contrast between believers and unbelievers.

In the Jewish wedding system, when the marriage was to be consummated, the bridegroom would go to the home of the bride to fetch her and bring her to his home. As he approached his own home, he would be met by a procession of virgins who would conduct the bride and groom for the marriage ceremony to be followed by the marriage feast. This is the background of this parable.

When the *bridegroom*, the Messiah, returns to earth with His Bride—the Church—for the marriage feast, the *virgins* will be responsible for both watching for His return, and being ready to light the lamps upon His return. The five *virgins* who were wise will be the ones who are believers; hence, they will be both ready and watching. They are the ones who have the *oil*, a common symbol of the Holy Spirit. Only the wise ones enter the marriage feast, the common symbol for the Messianic Kingdom. Because the Messiah is pictured as already with His Bride, the Church which had been raptured, these who have the *oil* are people who became believers during the Tribulation. They are saved and invited to the wedding feast as guests. The five foolish virgins will be the unbelievers and, therefore, will be neither ready nor watching. They do not have any *oil*. It should be noted that the text does not say that the foolish virgins ran out of oil, but that they *have no oil with them*. They never had the oil or the Holy Spirit to begin with.

That is the whole point of this parable, and it would be wrong to try to develop too many details from a simple parable. In this parable,

there is an extended emphasis on watching and readiness, both of which are accomplished by faith in Jesus the Messiah. Only wise ones enter the marriage feast.

5. *The Parable of the Talents—Matthew 25:14-30*

For it is as when a man, going into another country, called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one; to each according to his several ability; and he went on his journey. Straightway he that received the five talents went and traded with them, and made other five talents. In like manner he also that received the two gained other two. But he that received the one went away and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money. Now after a long time the lord of those servants comes, and makes a reckoning with them. And he that received the five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, you delivered unto me five talents: lo, I have gained other five talents. His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant: you have been faithful over a few things, I will set you over many things; enter you into the joy of your lord. And he also that received the two talents came and said, Lord, you delivered unto me two talents: lo, I have gained other two talents. His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant: you have been faithful over a few things, I will set you over many things; enter you into the joy of your lord. And he also that had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew you that you are a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter; and I was afraid, and went away and hid your talent in the earth: lo, you have your own. But his lord answered and said unto him, You wicked and slothful servant, you knew that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I did not scatter; you ought therefore to have put my money to the bankers, and at my coming I should have received back my own with interest. Take ye away therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him that has the ten talents. For unto every one that has shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that has not, even that which he has shall be taken away. And cast ye out the

unprofitable servant into the outer darkness: there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth.

The point of the fifth parable is to reemphasize, in an extended way, the necessity *to keep on laboring while watching and waiting*. Again, the distinction is not between different kinds of believers, but between believers and unbelievers. The believers will keep on laboring while they are watching for the Lord's return; but the unbeliever cannot labor in the work of the Lord, and therefore will have nothing to show at the time of the Lord's return. He is declared to be the wicked one. He ends up in the place of *outer darkness* and the place of *the weeping and the gnashing of teeth*, the descriptive phrases of the Lake of Fire.

N. *The Judgment of the Gentiles—Matthew 25:31-46*

The Olivet Discourse comes to an end with the Judgment of the Gentiles and it is here that the application of the five parables is made:

But when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all the nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry, and ye gave me to eat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we you hungry, and fed you? or athirst, and gave you drink? And when saw we you a stranger, and took you in? or naked, and clothed you? And when saw we you sick, or in prison, and came unto you? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his

> *angels: for I was hungry, and ye did not give me to eat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer, saying, Lord, when saw we you hungry, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto you? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of these least, ye did it not unto me. And these shall go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous into eternal life.*

The *time* of the judgment will be after the Second Coming of the Messiah when the Throne of David will be set up (v. 31).

The *place* of the judgment is not given in this passage, but it is given in a parallel passage found in Joel 3:1-3. This is a judgment that will take place just outside the City of Jerusalem in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, which lies between the city and the Mount of Olives.

The *subjects* of the judgment are individuals; this will be an individual judgment rather than a national one (vv. 32-33). The Greek word translated *nations* has the primary meaning of "Gentiles" and is so translated elsewhere in the New Testament. All the Gentiles who survive the Tribulation and the Campaign of Armageddon will be gathered into the Valley of Jehoshaphat and will then be separated by the Messiah; some are brought to His left side and some are brought to His right side. Those brought to His right are called the *sheep* Gentiles, and those brought to His left are called the *goat* Gentiles.

The *basis* of this judgment is going to be anti-Semitism or pro-Semitism. The individual Gentiles will be judged on the basis of their treatment of the Messiah's *brethren*, namely, the Jewish people during the Tribulation (vv. 34-35). Some have tried to make the term *brethren* refer to saints in general, but this would render the passage meaningless. There are three specific groups mentioned in this passage: the *sheep* Gentiles, the *goat* Gentiles, and the *brethren*. If the *brethren* are saints in general, then who are the *sheep*, since they, too, have eternal life? It would be very confusing to make both the *sheep* and the *brethren* as saints of the same caliber. From this context alone, it should be very evident that the *brethren* must refer to Jewish people because the saints are the *sheep* and the unsaved are the *goats*. Furthermore, the parallel passage of Joel 3:1-3 makes it certain that these *brethren* are the Jewish people of the Tribulation. The term *brethren* here

is used in the sense of "brethren in the flesh." The fact that only Matthew records this segment of the Olivet Discourse also teaches the same truth since his is the most Jewish of the Gospels and his primary concern has been how Messiah's coming has and will affect the Jewish people.

The *sheep*, who are the pro-Semites, are clearly stated to be the *righteous* ones. Will they be saved, then, because of their pro-Semitism? This cannot be, for that would mean their salvation was purely on the basis of works. This passage is an example of James 2:14-26, proving one's faith by one's works. Because these Gentiles are already believers in the Lord Jesus the Messiah, they will refuse to join the policy of the Antichrist in his attempt to destroy the Jews. So while Jews will undergo a great persecution, these believing Gentiles will do what they can to help the Jews under these conditions. Their works toward the Messiah's *brethren* will prove their faith. In this manner, they are the ones who will be watching, ready, and laboring in accordance with the admonitions of the five parables. Because they are saved Gentiles, they will be allowed to enter into the Messianic Kingdom, and they will be the ones who will populate the Gentile nations during the Messianic Kingdom (vv. 34-40).

On the other hand, the *goats* will be the anti-Semites who, because of their unbelief in Jesus, will join the ranks of the persecutors under the Antichrist's authority. They will show their lack of faith by their works. They are the ones who will *not* be watching, ready, or laboring, in violation of the five parables. For this reason, they will be killed at this point and will be excluded from the Messianic Kingdom (vv. 41-45).

The ultimate and final result after the Kingdom is that the believing Gentiles will enter *into eternal life* while the unbelieving Gentiles will enter *into eternal punishment* (v. 46).

Conclusion

The Olivet Discourse is the most detailed teaching that the Messiah gave concerning future things. It was His last great discourse as a prophet because from this point, He went into a transitional period from prophet to priest as He offered a sacrifice, that of His own blood, and then began to function as our High Priest after the Order of Melchizedek. When He returns to fulfill the rest of the Olivet Discourse, He will come as King.

The Olivet Discourse contains words for believers today: to look up,

for our redemption draws nigh; and words for unbelievers today: to believe on the Messiah. It also has words for those who will be living during the Great Tribulation: for Jews to flee; and for Gentiles to watch, to be ready, and to labor.

APPENDIX VI

The Eight Mysteries of the New Testament

Introduction

A. Definition

The Greek word that is used for "mystery" is very much like the English word: *musterion.* It is the Greek word from which the English word "mystery" originates. The etymology of the word is from the Greek root, *mueo*, which means "to shut," normally a reference to shutting the eyes. Thus, the root meaning has the concept of "one who shuts his eyes." As he shuts his eyes, he begins to meditate and things are revealed to him, so the derived meaning is "one who is initiated into the mysteries."

In classical Greek, which preceded the Greek of the New Testament, it had the basic following meanings: "a hidden thing," "a secret ceremony," "a secret teaching," "a mystery," "secret rites," or instruments of the teaching connected with them.

In New Testament Greek, the meaning is both technical and simple: It refers to something that was totally unrevealed in the Old Testament, and only revealed in the New Testament. For something to qualify as a New Testament mystery, it must be something totally unrevealed anywhere in the Old Testament. If it is knowable from the Old Testament, it is not a mystery. A mystery, then, is something only knowable from the New Testament.

1. Scripture

The above definition is derived from six key passages.

In Matthew 13, Jesus introduces the Mystery Kingdom, one of the eight mysteries to be discussed in this study. In verse 11, Jesus mentions the *mysteries of the kingdom*. In verse 35, He said, *I will utter things hidden from the foundation of the world*. Hence a mystery is something hidden since the foundation of the world.

A second key passage is Romans 16:25-26:... *according to the revelation of the mystery which had been kept in silence through times eternal but now is manifested,...* First: the mystery has been kept in silence through all eternity past. Second: it has only now been revealed.

A third passage is I Corinthians 2:7: *but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, even the wisdom that had been hidden, which God had foreordained before the worlds unto our glory*. In other words, the mystery has been *hidden*; God has predestined this mystery, and the goal of the mystery is our ultimate glory.

The fourth passage is Ephesians 3:4-5:... *the mystery of Christ; which in other generations was not made known unto the sons of men, as it has now been revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets...* Note two important points here: *first*, the mystery was *not made known* to previous generations—all those generations of the Old Testament and the intertestamental period knew nothing about the mystery because it had not been revealed; but *second*, it has only *now been revealed* to His New Testament Apostles and prophets. Note the word *now*. The *prophets* here are the prophets of the New Testament, because these are things *now* being revealed to His *holy apostles and prophets*.

A fifth passage is Ephesians 3:9: *to make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery which for ages had been hid in God*. Here again, note two things: *first*, the mystery has been *hid in God*, but *second*, now all men may know this mystery.

A sixth passage is Colossians 1:26: *the mystery that has been hid for ages and generations: but now it has been manifested to his saints*. Again, two things are evident: *first*, the mystery has been *hid for ages and generations*, but *second*, it is *now* being revealed unto the saints.

These six passages provide a definition of a mystery as something that was unrevealed in the Old Testament and now is revealed for the first time in the New Testament. To summarize what the word *mystery* means, then, it is the secret thoughts, plans, and dispensations of God that are hidden from humanity and must be revealed by divine revelation. The word *mystery* in the New Testament does not carry our modern English

meaning, i.e., something that is inexplicable. In the New Testament, the word *mystery* is something unrevealed until now, and being revealed only now, *now* being New Testament times. Therefore, it is now understandable and explicable.

2. Six Observations

Six observations may be made.

First: by the time Paul was writing, the mystery had already been revealed, though it had been unrevealed until that point.

Second: the mystery was revealed specifically to the Apostles and New Testament prophets. Therefore, they were to lay down the foundation of the Church (Eph. 2:19-22) and they were to record New Testament revelation which contains the revelation of the mysteries (Eph. 3:1-10). These were the two purposes of the two gifts of apostleship and prophecy.

Third: the mystery is now to be understood by the saints with the help of the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 2:14).

Fourth: the word *mystery* in the New Testament is not a casual or loosely used term, but a carefully chosen term that is important for biblical theology, which, in turn, affects many areas of Systematic Theology. For example, in regard to Bibliology (Doctrine of Scripture), the mystery involves new revelation that came through the New Testament prophets; in Theology Proper (Doctrine of God), the mystery includes the providence and the decrees of God; concerning Christology (Doctrine of the Son), part of the mystery is the present-day indwelling of the Messiah; in Pneumatology (Doctrine of the Holy Spirit), the Holy Spirit is the key to understanding the mystery; Satanology (Doctrine of Satan) includes the fact that Satan has his counterfeit mystery; Israelology (Doctrine of Israel) includes the mystery of God's Kingdom Program in this age, as well as Israel's present hardening; in terms of Ecclesiology (Doctrine of the Church), five of the eight mysteries apply to the Church; and Eschatology (Doctrine of the Last Days) includes the mystery of the translation of the saints and the destruction of the satanic mystery.

Fifth: the order of the revelation of the mystery is in two stages: *First*, Jesus was the first One to reveal a facet of the mystery by revealing the Mystery Kingdom in the parables to the Apostles; *second*, the revelation

of the mystery came by the Apostles and New Testament prophets to the saints. Only now has it been made manifest (Rom. 16:25-26): It was made known to Paul by revelation (Eph. 3:3); it was given to the Apostles and prophets (Eph. 3:5); and it is now being revealed to the saints (Col. 1:26). Hence, the New Testament took only one generation to write, whereas the Old Testament took 1500 years. With the death of the last Apostle, the New Testament was complete, and with it, the revelation of all the mysteries.

Sixth: Paul felt a unique burden as a servant entrusted with the mysteries to proclaim them: *Let a man so account of us, as of ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God* (I Cor. 4:1); *how that by revelation was known unto me the mystery* (Eph. 3:3); *ye can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ* (Eph. 3:4). *Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, was this grace given,. . . to make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery* (Eph. 3:8-9); *to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak* (Eph. 6:19-20); *Praying for us also, that God may open unto us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds; that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak* (Col. 4:3-4).

B. Usage

As to *number*, the word *mystery* is found 28 times in the New Testament: It is found once in each of the synoptic Gospels; Paul used the word 21 times, and is, in fact, the major user of the word; and finally, it is used four times in the Book of Revelation.

As to the *categories* of usages, there are three basic categories. *First*, the major way the word *mystery* is used is to describe the divine plan of God in the Messiah, and this would include things like the Mystery Kingdom, the Gentile role, and the Church. A *second* category, used only twice, is secrets revealed to individuals (I Cor. 13:2; 14:2). The *third* category is the hidden meaning found in symbols and types. It was a mystery because it was hidden typologically in specific symbols. That would include, for example, the seven stars and seven lampstands (Rev. 1:20) and Mystery Babylon (Rev. 17:5, 7).

C. *The Origin of Paul's Concept*

Paul was the major user of the term, and he was the main recipient and the main proclaimer of the revelation of the mystery. But what was the origin of Paul's concept? There are two basic views.

1. The Pagan Mystery Religions

The first view is that Paul received his basic concept of mystery from the pagan mystery religions prevalent in the Roman Empire of his day. There were different religions known as "mystery religions." The mystery religion in paganism was rooted in the Babylonian story of *Tammuz* and *Ishtar*, god and goddess. The mystery pagan religions spread throughout the Greek-speaking world and the Roman Empire and, indeed, played a very important role from the seventh century B.C. until the fourth century A.D. For one thousand years, the mystery religions of paganism were a very prevalent system. Although there were a number of different mystery religions, there were four elements common to all: *first*, there were cultic rites and ceremonies performed by a circle of devotees to portray and to share in the destiny of a god; *second*, only the initiated were allowed any knowledge of these rites and ceremonies; *third*, the devotees were promised salvation through these rites by the dispensing of cosmic life; and *fourth*, there was a vow of silence in that they were not to share any information about the secret rites and ceremonies with ordinary mortals or those outside.

These four similarities of pagan mystery religions show that this was not the source of Paul's mystery. *First*: Paul was raised in Tarsus, and so would have known about these mystery religions, but as a very strict Pharisee, he would never have participated in them. *Second*: the mystery of the cults was something that was known only among the selected few and to be revealed to the few, but the biblical mystery was something totally unknown to any man until God revealed it. *Third*: in paganism, those who knew the mystery could not share it with others, but the biblical mystery is available to all. For these reasons, the pagan mystery was not the source of Paul's mystery concept. The only point of similarity is the use of the term "mystery," but similarity is not sameness.

2. The Jewish Context

The second view as to the origin of Paul's concept is that it came from a Jewish context and a Jewish source. In the *Septuagint* (a Greek translation of the Old Testament from about 250 B.C.), the word *musterion* (mystery) is used eight times in chapter two of the Book of Daniel (vv. 18, 19, 27, 28, 29, 30, and twice in v. 47). It is a Greek translation of the Aramaic word *raza*. In the English Bibles, the word is translated as "secret." But the emphasis in the Daniel passage is that it is God Who reveals the mysteries.

A corollary word is the Hebrew word *sod*, used 22 times in the Old Testament, and generally having the meaning of "secret counsel." It is a divine secret that can be known and understood only if revealed by God to His people through the prophets. This is the closest to Paul's usage.

Paul did not get his concept from paganism. He got his concept from the *Septuagint*'s translation and usage of *raza*, and the Hebrew concept of the word *sod*.

D. Summary of the Content of the Mystery

1. The Gospels

In the Gospels, it is used only of the Mystery Kingdom: in Matthew 13:11, *the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven*; in Mark 4:11, *the mystery of the kingdom of God*; and in Luke 8:10, *the mysteries of the kingdom of God*. In these contexts, the Kingdom in its present form is co-existing with evil. These passages also emphasize the inability of unbelievers to understand the Kingdom terminology in parabolic form.

2. Paul's Writings

The most extensive usage is by Paul, who uses the term 21 times in eighteen passages. A passage-by-passage summary of the Apostle's usage follows: in Romans 11:15, the mystery includes the partial hardening of Israel; in Romans 16:25-27, the mystery includes how He will bring the Gentiles to obedience of the faith for His glory; in I Corinthians 2:1, the mystery is now proclaimed; in I Corinthians 2:7, God's wisdom is a mystery in contrast to human wisdom (this

is in the fuller context of I Corinthians 1:18-3:9, where his point is that human ability cannot declare the mystery of God, and what no eye has seen, God has revealed); in I Corinthians 4:1, Paul is the steward of the mystery that they must recognize; in I Corinthians 13:2, if it were possible to know all mysteries, it would be of no value unless they are revealed and proclaimed in love; in I Corinthians 14:2, tongues without interpretation are a mystery to the hearer as the hearer cannot understand, and the speaker is speaking things which are unrevealed; in I Corinthians 15:51, the mystery of the translation will occur at the time of the Rapture; in Ephesians 1:9-10, the mystery of His will to unite all things in the Messiah, for in the fullness of time, the present chaos will end as the world is brought to its full relationship to the Messiah, and all things are to be brought under the headship of the Messiah; in Ephesians 3:1-13, the mystery (found three times, in verses 3, 4, and 9) includes the acceptance of the Gentiles, and the wisdom of God is to be made known to the spirit world through the Church (the mystery here includes the concept of Jews and Gentiles in one Body, and the meaning and purpose of the Church); in Ephesians 5:32, the Church and Messiah, as Bride and Groom, are part of the mystery, as Paul reveals that this is the mystery meaning of Genesis 2:24, and the union of husband and wife parallels the union of Messiah and the Church; in Ephesians 6:19-20, Paul talks about the mystery of the gospel, and his preaching of the gospel is linked to proclaiming the mystery itself, and it must now be proclaimed; in Colossians 1:26-27 (twice), the mystery centers in the Messiah, and as he discusses the mystery of Gentile salvation, it is the mystery of *Christ in you, the hope of glory*, for the mystery includes the indwelling of the Messiah in every believer; in Colossians 2:2-3, he talks about *the mystery of God, even Christ*, for the Messiah was God's mystery, because in Him, all the treasures, the wisdom and knowledge are hidden; in Colossians 4:3, the mystery includes the Messiah and the Church in the context of proclamation; in II Thessalonians 2:7, the mystery of lawlessness is discussed, which is Satan's counterfeit mystery and the antithesis to God's purposes, for the mystery of iniquity is the man of sin and the satanic mystery is the demonic gospel; I Timothy 3:9 speaks of the mystery of the faith, for the mystery is the object of faith, which is hidden from ungodly men; finally, in I Timothy 3:16, Paul talks

about the mystery of godliness that is hidden from ungodly men, because true godliness is produced by the mystery, for the mystery of godliness is the Messiah Himself.

3. The Book of Revelation

The Book of Revelation uses the word four times in three passages: *first* is Revelation 1:20, where he deals with the mystery of the seven lampstands; *second* is Revelation 10:7, where the subject is the mystery of God which is coming to a close or consummation; and *third* is Revelation 17:5 and 7 (twice), where it is used to discuss the Mystery Babylon, one of two satanic mysteries.

E. Opposition to the Mystery

As God was revealing the mystery, there was also opposition to the mystery. At the time Jesus first revealed the concept of mystery in Matthew 13, He also stated in verses 3-7 and 18-22 that Satan has special opposition to the Mystery Kingdom in that he is working on unbelievers to reject the gospel, and he tries to keep believers from growing in the faith by overwhelming them with circumstances or by keeping them away from the Word of God through shallow teaching and focusing on experiences.

In I Corinthians 2:6-8, Paul states that the world opposes the mystery because it does not understand. Another point Paul makes is that he was imprisoned because of satanic opposition to the proclamation of the mystery (Eph. 6:19-20; Col. 4:2-4). In II Thessalonians 2:7, Paul discusses the satanic mystery, the mystery of lawlessness; while Messiah's mystery is absolute submission to God's law, Satan's mystery is absolute lawlessness.

Revelation 17:5 and 7 talk about Mystery Babylon and its false religious system, which is Satan's opposition to the true mystery. Finally, in Revelation 10:7, the writer points out that the Tribulation judgments will mean that God's mystery will finally destroy Satan's mystery, because then the mystery of God is finished, and God's Kingdom will be established on the earth.

F. The Understanding of the Mystery

How can one come to the point of really understanding this new revelation, unrevealed in the Old Testament? When Jesus talked about the Mystery Kingdom (Mat. 13:10-17), He stated that the mysteries of the Kingdom were not given to be understood by unbelievers, but only by believers; even then, it can only be understood by those believers who are willing to *hear and understand*. This requires discipline of study.

In I Corinthians 2:6-3:3, Paul describes four classes of people in relation to the mystery. The *first* category is the natural man, who is the unsaved man. The natural man does not know the mystery (2:7-8), nor does the natural man have the ability to understand the mystery (2:14). The *second* category is the *babe* in the Messiah (3:1). This is the new believer who for now can only understand the milk of the Word of God and therefore is not yet ready to understand the mysteries because these are part of the meat of the Word of God. The *third* category is the carnal man (3:1-3). This is the believer who has not matured and still needs the milk of the Word of God. He does have the ability to understand, but will not understand because of immaturity and because of a lack of desire or motivation; he seeks to fill his spiritual needs through worldly things and experiences. He has been saved long enough to progress from milk to meat, but has failed to do so. The *fourth* category is the spiritual man (2:11-13, 15-16), who does understand the mystery. He has disciplined himself to study the Word of God; he is instructed by the Holy Spirit; he understands the deep things of God and God's program for this age. He understands the mystery that awaits him in the future. Similar categories are found in Hebrews 5:11-14.

So, what is the process of gaining understanding of the mystery? What must one do to really understand the mysteries? Three key passages provide the answer.

The *first* passage is Isaiah 8:16, 19-20, and the point Isaiah makes is that the Word of God must be followed and studied. He admonishes his audience not to go after those who *chirp and mutter*, those who focus on all kinds of strange sounds and sensational experiences, but to the written Word of God, to the Law and the Testimony. The *law* is the Law of Moses and the *testimony* is the words of the Prophets. If they speak not according

to this word, there is no morning light in them.

In the *second* key passage, I Corinthians 4:6, Paul admonishes the Corinthian Church, which tended toward the sensational, carnal, and experiential, and warns them not to go beyond the things that are written.

The *third* key passage is II Timothy 3:12-4:4, where five points are made: *first*, the godly will suffer persecution (3:12); *second*, impostors are going to increase both deceiving and being deceived (3:13); *third*, the way to avoid being deceived is to abide in the teaching of Scripture, the written Word of God (3:14-17); *fourth*, there must be the application of discipling in the preaching of the Word (4:1-2); and *fifth*, this will counteract the false teachers (4:3-4). Paul predicted: *For the time will come when they* [believers] *will not endure the sound doctrine;* therefore, they will run to teachers who scratch their itching ears. They will turn away from truth and turn aside to fables. Believers who turn away from the study of the Scriptures are those who cannot endure sound doctrine. Those who seek experience will not understand the mystery. To learn sound doctrine is the way to understand the mysteries.

G. The Number of Mysteries

There are eight divine mysteries and two satanic mysteries for a total of ten. Because the eighth divine mystery will destroy the two satanic mysteries, this study will be divided in accordance with the eight divine mysteries.

1. The Mystery of the Kingdom

a. The Kingdom of God Program

Both the Old Testament and New Testament speak about the Kingdom of God. The basic meaning of the Kingdom of God is "God's rule." It is the sphere over which the sovereign God rules. Though there may be degrees of authority in different aspects of God's Kingdom Program, the basic meaning remains: God rules. There are three interrelated ideas in this concept: *first*, it includes the right to rule, the authority granted

to one in order to be able to rule; *second*, it includes the realm of rule, the area in which the ruling authority is exercised, such as the subjects over which one rules; and *third*, there is the reality of rule, the actual exercise of royal authority.

There are two aspects to God's Kingdom Program: the *eternal* aspect and the *temporal* aspect. The eternal aspect is the heavenly rule; the temporal aspect is the earthly manifestation of the universal sovereignty of God—it is the realm in which God rules in the affairs of men. Therefore, the Kingdom of God is both spiritual and physical. There are different facets to God's Program. However, some have tried to describe the different facets of God's Program by making a distinction between the terms "Kingdom of God" and "Kingdom of Heaven." The "Kingdom of Heaven" is defined as the eternal aspect, and the "Kingdom of God" as the temporal aspect. But that is simply not the way the terms are used. Actually, these terms are interchangeable. In fact, a look at the parallel Gospel accounts where the mystery is first found reveals that Matthew is the one who uses "Kingdom of Heaven" and he does so in the very same places where Mark and Luke use the "Kingdom of God." The reason Matthew uses the term "Kingdom of Heaven" is because his audience is a Jewish audience. Among the Jewish people, there was a special sensitivity to using God's Name, let alone using the word "God" itself. For example, to this day, Orthodox Jews will not write out the word "God," but instead will write "G-d." The tendency in Judaism is to show respect for these terms by using a substitute. Instead of using God's Name, then, they will say *Hashem* (the Name) or *Adoshem* (the Lord of the Name); in place of the Hebrew word *Elohim*, they will say *Elokim*, changing the middle letter to avoid pronouncing the word. Often, rather than saying the word "God," they use the term "Heaven." This is common in rabbinic literature. Both the *Mishnah* and the *Gemara*, which make up the *Talmud*, use the term "Kingdom of Heaven," and by that they mean the same thing as the "Kingdom of God." So yes, there are different facets to God's Kingdom Program, but the different facets cannot be differentiated on the basis of these two terms. The terms themselves are used interchangeably for all the various facets.

There is one more thing to note about the Kingdom of God: it is multi-faceted. That is why there seem to be contradictory statements about the Kingdom. For example, Mark 9:1 states that they will see the Kingdom of God come with power, i.e., the Kingdom

is something they will *see*. However, Luke 17:20-21 states that the *kingdom of God comes not with observation: neither shall they say to you, Lo, here! or, There! for lo, the kingdom of God is within you*. According to the first passage, the Kingdom will come with power and it will be quite visible; according to the second passage, it *cannot be seen*, or it does not come with observation. Which is it? The answer: It is both. There are no contradictions in the Word of God. The point is that God's Kingdom Program is multi-faceted. In total, there are five facets. Four of these facets were already known in the Old Testament; the fifth facet is the mystery that is only now revealed in the New Testament.

b. The Five Facets of God's Kingdom Program

(1) The Universal Kingdom or the Eternal Kingdom

The first facet of God's Kingdom Program goes by two names: the Universal Kingdom and the Eternal Kingdom. The basic meaning of this Universal or Eternal Kingdom is God's sovereign, providential rule over His creation. This emphasizes His sovereignty and providence, because God is always in control and nothing can happen outside His will. Things come to pass either by His directive or decretive will, or at times by His permissive will, but nothing ever happens outside His control.

The name "Eternal Kingdom" emphasizes the timeless aspect in that God is never out of control. The name "Universal Kingdom" emphasizes the sphere and the scope, because no matter where things exist in God's creation, everything is within His sovereign will and control, including the angelic realm.

Scriptures that speak of God's eternal, sovereign rule over His entire creation include: I Chronicles 29:11-12, *Yours is the kingdom* (universal); Psalm 10:16, *Jehovah is King for ever and ever* (eternal); Psalm 29:10, *Jehovah sits as King for ever* (eternal); Psalm 74:12, *God is my King of old* (eternal); Psalm 90:1-6 emphasizes both the eternal and universal aspects; Psalm 93:1-5, Jehovah's eternal reign and majesty; Psalm 103:19-22, Jehovah's kingdom rules *over all*; Psalm 145:1-21, the kingdom is both eternal and universal; Psalm 148:1-14, God's sovereign control over His whole creation; Jeremiah

10:10, Jehovah is the *everlasting King*; Lamentations 5:19, *Your throne is from generation to generation*; Daniel 4:17, 25, 32, the Most High controls the kingdoms of the world and gives it to whomsoever He will; and Daniel 6:26, His kingdom shall not be destroyed, His dominion is forever.

(2) The Spiritual Kingdom

The second facet of God's Kingdom Program is the Spiritual Kingdom, meaning God's rule in the heart of the believer. The Spiritual Kingdom is composed of *all* believers, and *only* believers, of *all* time. The means of entering this Kingdom is by regeneration by the Holy Spirit. In the present age, from Acts two until the Rapture, the Spiritual Kingdom and the Church are synonymous, but only during the period between Acts two and the Rapture. The Spiritual Kingdom, however, existed before the Church was born and will continue to exist after the Church is gone. Thus, it includes all the saints of the Old Testament, and the post-Rapture saints as well.

Scriptures that speak about the Spiritual Kingdom include: Matthew 6:33, *seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness*; Matthew 19:16, 23-24, eternal life equals the Kingdom of Heaven; John 3:3-5, you must be born again to enter the Kingdom of God; Acts 8:12, believing the good news about the Kingdom; Acts 20:25, the preaching of the Kingdom was the preaching of the gospel; Colossians 1:13-14, the kingdom of the Son of His love in whom there is redemption and forgiveness of sins; Colossians 4:11, *fellow-workers unto the kingdom of God*; I Thessalonians 2:12, he *calls you into his own kingdom*. The Spiritual Kingdom is comprised of all believers from Adam until the last person to be saved toward the end of the Messianic Kingdom.

(3) The Theocratic Kingdom

The third facet of God's Kingdom Program is the Theocratic Kingdom, which means God's rule over Israel, as Israel was a theocracy.

In regard to history, the Theocratic Kingdom was established by Moses at Mount Sinai with the Mosaic Covenant, and the Mosaic Law served as the constitution of the Theocratic Kingdom. After it was established by

Moses, it underwent two phases. The *first* phase is called the Mediatorial Kingdom, referring to the period from Moses to Samuel when God ruled His theocracy through mediators. These mediators were Moses, Joshua, and the Judges. Samuel was the last judge, as well as a transitional character who anointed the first two kings of Israel. The *second* phase, the Monarchial Kingdom, stretches from King David to King Zedekiah, with God ruling His theocracy through the House of David. When the Babylonians destroyed the city and the Temple in 586 B.C., the Theocratic Kingdom came to an end, and the "Times of the Gentiles" began.

In the latter days of the Theocratic Kingdom, its quality began to decline. The prophets came proclaiming the coming of a better, future kingdom, which will be the fourth facet of God's Kingdom Program, the Messianic Kingdom.

The Scriptures for the Theocratic Kingdom begin with Exodus 19 and go all the way to II Chronicles 36, which contain the history of the Theocratic Kingdom.

(4) The Messianic Kingdom or the Millennial Kingdom

The fourth facet of God's Kingdom Program is the Messianic Kingdom, or the Millennial Kingdom. The basic meaning is that of a literal, earthly kingdom in which the Messiah will rule over Israel and the Gentile nations from the Throne of David and from Jerusalem.

This facet, too, has two names. It is called the Messianic Kingdom, emphasizing the *personal* aspect in that the Messiah Himself will rule over this kingdom personally. The second name, the Millennial Kingdom, emphasizes the *timing* aspect and the fact that it will last for one thousand years.

The Messianic Kingdom is rooted in the Davidic Covenant, and it is a major subject of Old Testament prophecy.

In the New Testament, it is this Kingdom that was proclaimed to be *at hand* by John the Baptist, and this Kingdom was offered to Israel by Jesus, only to be rejected in Matthew 12. As a result of the rejection by Israel, the offer of the Kingdom was rescinded and revoked from that generation. From a human perspective, then, it could be said that the Messianic Kingdom was postponed; from a divine perspective, it was part of God's divine plan, and there was no postponement whatsoever. It was the means by which the Messiah would die and provide atone-

ment, already prophesied in Isaiah 52:13-53:12. It was also the means by which the gospel would extend to the Gentiles (Is. 49:1-13). This Kingdom is destined to be re-offered to the Jewish generation of the Tribulation, and that generation will accept it. The Messianic Kingdom will then be established. However, in the meantime, the fifth facet is to be put into effect, which now brings us to the *first actual mystery*: the Mystery Kingdom.

(5) The Mystery Kingdom

(a) Definition

The name "Mystery Kingdom" is derived from Matthew 13, which discusses the *mysteries of the kingdom* (13:11). The definition of a mystery is a truth not revealed in the Old Testament, but first revealed in the New; therefore, it is called the "Mystery Kingdom" because it is the only facet of God's Kingdom Program that was not revealed in the Old Testament.

The *establishment* of the Mystery Kingdom came as a result of the rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus and, therefore, the rejection of the offer of the Messianic Kingdom. The parables of Matthew 13 describe the mystery form of the Kingdom Program.

The *timing* of the Mystery Kingdom program can be stated generally as falling between the First and Second Comings of the Messiah. But to be more specifically correct, it begins with the rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus by Israel (Mat. 12-13) and ends with the acceptance of the Messiahship of Jesus by Israel (Mat. 23:37-39; 24:1-25:46).

The one key word that best defines and describes the Mystery Kingdom (though not an ideal term) is "Christendom." Not so much "Christianity," but the term "Christendom" applies everywhere in the world where the belief in Jesus is somehow affirmed, rightly or wrongly, in orthodoxy or heretically. This word and the parables of Matthew 13 describe conditions on earth and God's rule while the King is absent from the earth and is in Heaven. The Mystery Kingdom includes the time between Matthew 13 and Acts two; it also includes the whole Church Age and the Tribulation. All these time periods are within the focus of the Mystery Kingdom.

(b) The Parables of the Mystery Kingdom

The nine parables of Matthew 13, Mark 4, and Luke 8 describe the nature of the Mystery Kingdom.

The first parable is the Parable of the Sower. This parable is given in Matthew 13:3-9 and interpreted in 13:20-23. According to Mark 4:13, the understanding of the first parable is the key to understanding all subsequent parables, because the motifs laid down in the first parable—which Jesus Himself interprets—becomes the key to understanding the others. This parable makes four points. *First*, the Mystery Kingdom Age will be characterized by the sowing of the gospel seed. *Second*, it will receive opposition from the world, the flesh, and the devil. *Third*, it will be marked by different preparations of the soil. Thus some parts of the world are more responsive to the gospel than other parts. *Fourth*, it is also marked by four different responses to the seed sown. *First* is the *by the way side* response, which is the response of unbelief; these hear the gospel but never believe. *Second* is the *rocky places* response. These hear the gospel, believe it, and are saved. However, they are never rooted in the Word of God, so they are never stabilized in their spiritual life. They are the ones who are tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine. They also tend to be very experiential, but their experiences go up and down, so their spiritual life goes up and down. Because they are never rooted in the Word, they are never stabilized in their faith. While they are saved, they never produce the kind of fruit that believers need to produce. These never leave the milk stage. *Third* is the *thorny ground* response. They also believe. However, they never seem to be able to overcome the cares of this world. They are *choked* by the world and never seem to stabilize. While those who fall on *rocky places* are not stabilized because they were never rooted in the Word of God, the ones who fall among *the thorns* may be theologically sound and have a good knowledge of the Scriptures. They may not be experience-centered; however, they still seem to have difficulty living consistent spiritual lives because they are involved in the cares of the world. These may be family, financial, or social cares. As a result, they, too, are not stablized and also do not produce the kind of fruit they should. These also never leave the milk stage. *Fourth*, is the *good ground* response. These are people who believe and are rooted in the Word of God. They overcome

the world and, as a result, they are productive in the spiritual life. These are the ones who progress from milk to meat.

The second parable is the Parable of the Seed Growing of Itself (Mk. 4:26-29) and makes two points. *First*: the seed sown will spring to life of its own accord; the seed has an inner energy, so that it will inexplicably produce regeneration. *Second*: the springing to life does not depend on the sower; once he has sown the seed, there is nothing more that he can do. The gospel itself is the power of God that produces regeneration.

The third parable is the Parable of the Tares. This parable is presented in Matthew 13:24-30 and explained in 13:36-43. It makes three points. *First*: true sowing will be imitated by a false counter-sowing. *Second*: there will be a side-by-side development as a result of the two sowings. *Third*: the judgment at the end of the Mystery Kingdom will separate the two, with the good brought into the Messianic Kingdom and the bad excluded. This is the same as the Judgment of the Sheep and the Goats in Matthew 25:31-46. The essential character of each type of sowing can be known only by fruitfulness or fruitlessness.

The fourth parable is the Parable of the Mustard Seed (Mat. 13:31-32). The points made here are: *first*, the Mystery Kingdom will assume huge outer proportions; *second*, the Mystery Kingdom will have an abnormal external growth until it becomes a monstrosity; and *third*, this monstrosity will become a resting place for birds. In the first parable, the *birds* were agents of Satan. Within this monstrosity of Christendom, then, will be various satanic elements, cultic groups that claim to believe in Jesus but deny something essential, such as His deity, all under the umbrella of "Christianity."

The fifth parable is the Parable of the Leaven (Mat. 13:33). A *woman*, when used symbolically, often symbolizes a spiritual or religious entity. This could be used positively or negatively. On the positive side, there is Israel as the Wife of Jehovah, and the Church as the Bride of Messiah. On the negative side there is the Jezebel of Revelation 2:20 and the Great Harlot of Revelation 17:1-8. Here, *woman* is used negatively and refers to a false religious system. False religious elements will be introduced into the Mystery Kingdom resulting in spiritual fornication. *Leaven* is the symbol of sin (I Cor. 5:6-8), and particularly in Matthew, the sin of false teaching (Mat. 16:6, 11-12). Thus, false teaching is introduced into the Mystery Kingdom. The three

measures of meal depict the fact that Christendom eventually divides itself into three divisions: Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, and Protestantism, with all of them having a greater or lesser measure of false teaching. The Parable of the Leaven, then, teaches that the Mystery Kingdom will be marked by inward doctrinal corruption in all three divisions.

The sixth parable is the Parable of the Hidden Treasure (Mat. 13:44). The *treasure* is a symbol of Israel (Ex. 19:5; Deut. 14:2; Ps. 135:4). The point of this parable is that while most of Israel rejected the Messiah, nevertheless, God will gain a remnant from Israel. The treasure thus is the Remnant of Israel today (Rom. 11:5) and the Israel of God (Gal. 6:16).

The seventh parable is the Parable of the Pearl of Great Price (Mat. 13:45-46). While the Bible reveals that *the treasure* represents Israel, it does not state anywhere exactly what *the pearl* represents when it is used symbolically. Knowing that Christendom includes both Jews and Gentiles, very likely the parable of *the pearl of great price* is "the other side of the coin" of the parable of *the treasure*. *The treasure* represents the Jews, so it is natural that *the pearl* would represent the Gentiles. Furthermore, the pearl comes from the sea, and the sea symbolizes the Gentile world (Dan. 7:2-3; Rev. 17:1, 15). Finally, the pearl comes from the oyster, which itself was unclean in the Law of Moses but made clean by the Law of Messiah. The *first* point made is that there will also be salvation among the Gentiles. *Second*, the Gentiles in the Church are formulated by gradual accretion, like a pearl develops when a speck of dirt falls into the oyster. The oyster begins covering this speck, and covering it, and covering it until, by gradual accretion, it becomes a pearl. This teaches the concept that the Gentiles in the Church are being formulated by gradual accretion. One of the primary purposes of the Church Age is *to call out from among the Gentiles a people for His name* (Acts 15:14), and this is to continue *until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in* (Rom. 11:25). This is indeed pictured by this parable.

The eighth parable is the Parable of the Net (Mat. 13:47-50). The *sea*, again, represents the Gentiles, and the point of the net is that the Mystery Kingdom will end with the Judgment of the Gentiles, with the righteous brought into the Messianic Kingdom and the unrighteous excluded. This is the same as the Judgment of the Gentiles in Matthew 25:31-46.

The ninth parable is the Parable of the Householder (Mat. 13:51-53), which teaches that some aspects of the Mystery Kingdom have similarities with the other facets of God's Kingdom Program; other aspects are brand new, never found before.

(c) Summary of the Nine Parables

The following summary provides the movement and development of the Mystery Kingdom.

First parable (sower): there will be the sowing of the gospel seed throughout this age.

Second parable (seed growing of itself): this seed which has been sown will have an inner energy so that it will spring to life of its own accord.

Third parable (tares): the true sowing will be imitated by false counter-sowing.

The next two parables are the results of the third parable.

Fourth parable (mustard seed): the Mystery Kingdom will assume huge outer proportions until it becomes a monstrosity.

Fifth parable (leaven): it will be marked by inward doctrinal corruption.

The next two parables are the results of the first and second parables.

Sixth parable (treasure): nevertheless, the Lord will gain a remnant from Israel.

Seventh parable (pearl): God will also gain a people from among the Gentiles; both the Jews and Gentiles together, *the treasure* and *the pearl*, will form the Church.

Eighth parable (net): the Mystery Kingdom will end with the judgment of the Gentiles; the unrighteous will be excluded from the Messianic Kingdom, and the righteous will be taken in.

Ninth parable (householder): the Mystery Kingdom has both similarities and dissimilarities with the other facets of God's Kingdom Program.

(d) Distinction from the Other Facets

The Mystery Kingdom must be distinguished from the other four facets. *First*, it is not the same as the Universal Kingdom or the Eternal

Kingdom: the Mystery Kingdom is limited in time, from the rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus until the acceptance of the Messiahship of Jesus and therefore it is not eternal; furthermore, it is limited to the earth only, so it is not universal. *Second*, it is not the same as the Spiritual Kingdom because the Mystery Kingdom has both believers and unbelievers in it; it has both wheat and tares. *Third*, it is not the same as the Theocratic Kingdom because it does not involve God's rule over Israel as a theocracy and it includes both Jews and Gentiles. *Fourth*, it is not the same as the Messianic Kingdom because Jesus is not ruling over this Kingdom from Jerusalem, but from Heaven. Furthermore, He is ruling this Kingdom from the Throne of God the Father and not the Throne of David. Finally, the Messianic Kingdom was no mystery; most of what is known about the Messianic Kingdom is revealed in the Old Testament. *Fifth*, it is not the same as the Church. The Church is *within* the Mystery Kingdom; it is the believing element, the wheat of God's Mystery Kingdom, which includes both the treasure and the pearl, but it is not the totality. Replacement Theologians have invariably tried to make the Church and the Kingdom of God one and the same, but they are not. The Church is an aspect of God's Kingdom Program; it is an aspect of both the Spiritual Kingdom and the Mystery Kingdom, but it is not the totality of the Mystery Kingdom.

2. The Five Mysteries of the Church

a. The Mystery of the Seven Stars and Seven Golden Lampstands— Revelation 1:20

The first of these five is the second mystery: it is the Mystery of the Seven Stars and Seven Golden Lampstands, as found in Revelation 1:20:

> *The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks are seven churches.*

This verse reveals two aspects of the first mystery. The *first* aspect is that

the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches. When the word "star" is used symbolically, it refers to angels (with one possible exception). Because this was already known from the Old Testament, this cannot be the mystery. The mystery is the fact that each local church has a guardian angel, a truth not contained in the Old Testament. A mystery must always be an element not revealed in the Old Testament. The purpose of this aspect is often to carry out the blessings or judgments mentioned in the seven letters addressed to the seven angels of the seven churches. The *second* aspect is that the seven lampstands are seven churches. Because a seven-branched lampstand (*menorah*) was a symbol of Israel in the Old Testament, this could not be the mystery. However, the fact that each local church is an individual lampstand is something unrevealed in the Old Testament. The mystery here is the fact that the seven individual lampstands symbolize the seven local churches. In the Book of Revelation, the lampstand represents a witness (i.e., 11:3-4). Thus each local church is to be a witness, and if it fails to do so, then the lampstand can be removed (2:5).

b. The Mystery of the Body—Ephesians 3:1-12

The third mystery (the second pertaining to the Church) is that of the Body.

In Ephesians 3:1, Paul states that he has become a prisoner on behalf of the Gentiles. The background to 3:1 is his teaching in 2:11-22, where he wrote that the Gentiles had not been enjoying the spiritual blessings of the Jewish covenants because of the Mosaic Law, which served as a middle wall of partition to keep Gentiles, as Gentiles, away from enjoying the spiritual blessings of the Jewish covenants (2:11-12). The Messiah's death broke down this wall of partition and brought the Gentiles near (2:13-15). The Messiah has now united Jews and Gentiles into one Body (2:16-18), and this one Body is the Church (2:15-22). In Colossians 1:18 Paul describes the Church as the Body of Messiah. Until then, there were only two entities: Jews and Gentiles. But now He has created a new third entity that is both Jewish and Gentile: the Church, the Body of Messiah. The Gentiles are fellow citizens with the Jewish believers of the household of God (2:19); the foundation of this household, the foundation of the Church, is the Apostles and New Testament prophets, with Jesus being the foundation stone (2:20); and this Church is now the Temple of God

(2:21-22). Paul's calling was to expound upon the Gentiles in the Body. All this is the background to Paul's statement in 3:1, that he has become a prisoner on behalf of the Gentiles.

Now, in 3:2, Paul adds that the knowledge of the *dispensation of that grace of God* was given to him on behalf of the Gentiles. It is in this dispensation that the mystery of the Church is being developed.

In 3:3-4, Paul reemphasizes the fact that the revelation of the mystery was made to him (v.3), and this is why he had a special and unique understanding of the mystery (v. 4). For this reason, Paul felt constrained to proclaim the mystery (I Cor. 2:1), and he considered himself the steward of the mysteries of God (I Cor. 4:1). He wished to proclaim the mystery of the gospel in boldness, for which he was willing to suffer physically (Eph. 6:19-20; Col. 4:2-4).

In 3:5, he states that this mystery had not been revealed in the past, but has only now been revealed to His *holy apostles* and New Testament *prophets*, which is what makes it a mystery.

But what exactly is this mystery? The content of this mystery is that Jewish and Gentile believers are united in one Body (v. 6), and this is the *one new man* of 2:15. The fact of Gentile salvation is not the mystery, since the fact that the Messiah would save Gentiles was revealed in the Old Testament. The mystery which was previously unrevealed was the fact that Jewish and Gentile believers will make up one new entity, the Body of Messiah, the Church. Thus, the position of the Gentiles, he states, is that of three things: *first*, they are *fellow-heirs*, set to share with Israel in the inheritance of the Kingdom; *second*, they are *fellow-members of the Body*, the Church; and *third*, they are *fellow partakers of the promise*. The promise is the covenantal promise of spiritual blessings; the position is *in Christ Jesus*; and the means of obtaining that position is *through the gospel*.

In 3:7, then, Paul states, *I was made a minister according to the gift of that grace of God which was given me*. He was made a minister of the mystery and was using his spiritual gift to proclaim the mystery on the basis of the working of God's power.

In 3:8, Paul is the Apostle of the mystery: *Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, was this grace given.* The purpose is *to preach unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ*, making His riches the Gentiles' riches as they become partakers.

The goal of it all, according to 3:9, is *to make all men see what is the*

dispensation of the mystery. The *dispensation of the mystery* is the mystery of the *dispensation of grace* of verse two because the Church mystery exists during the Dispensation of Grace. This had been hidden *in God who created all things*, but now has been revealed.

In 3:10, he spells out the purpose: the object is that *the principalities and powers in the heavenly places*, in other words, the spirit world, might know. This might even include the wicked angels of 6:12. What is it they might know? *The manifold wisdom of God*. It will be *through the Church*, because the mystery here is the union of both Jews and Gentiles, which shows the wisdom of God and His program for this age.

While this part of the plan of God is only now being revealed, nevertheless it is *according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord* (v. 11).

Paul concludes in 3:12, spelling out his confidence in proclaiming the mystery. The mystery here is a union of Jews and Gentiles in one Body, unrevealed in the Old Testament.

c. The Mystery of the Indwelling Messiah—Colossians 1:24-29

The third mystery relevant to the Church—the fourth mystery in all—is the Mystery of the Indwelling Messiah.

In verse 24, Paul states that he rejoices in his afflictions, because he was suffering for the readers' sake. He knows he is suffering for the sake of Messiah's Body, which is the Church. Again, the Body is the Church made up of Jews and Gentiles, which is the mystery of Ephesians. But here in Colossians, Paul will reveal yet another mystery.

In verse 25, Paul describes his ministry. *Whereof* [meaning for the sake of the Church] *I was made a minister, according to the dispensation of God*. This is the same as the Dispensation of Grace in Ephesians 3:2, and it is the same as the Dispensation of the Mystery in Ephesians 3:9. The object of the mystery, *which was given me to you-ward*, is the Gentiles. The purpose was *to fulfill the word of God*.

He then describes the revelation of the mystery (v. 26). He presents it in two time periods, past and present: *First*, the past: *the mystery which had been hid for ages and generations. Second*, the present: *but now has been manifested to his saints*. Again, this is what makes it a mystery: the

fact that it was unrevealed in the Old Testament and revealed for the first time in the New.

In verse 27, he moves on to discuss the object and the content of the mystery. *First*, the object is *to whom God was pleased to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles.* Here, once again, the Gentiles are in focus, as this mystery involves them; *to whom* refers to the saints. *Second*, the content: *Christ in you, the hope of glory*. The fact that the Messiah now indwells every believer is the mystery unrevealed in the Old Testament. The fact of the Holy Spirit's indwelling believers was not a mystery in and of itself, as it was already known in the Old Testament. While the Old Testament revealed many things about the coming of the Messiah, His Person, His message, and His program, it never revealed that He would indwell every believer. This is now revealed in the New Testament, fulfilling the promise that Jesus made in John 14:20 (*I am in you*) and John 14:23 (*We will abide with Him*). This, Paul states, is the *hope of glory*. Then throughout the Epistle of Colossians, Paul elaborates on this *hope of glory* and states five things. *First*, the mystery of God is the Messiah, and this includes spiritual growth which is part of the hope of glory. *Second*, in 2:9-10, he states: *in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily*; He is indwelling all believers, and so in Him, we *are made full*, and this, too, is the hope of glory. *Third*, in 3:3: *For ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God*. In other words, once the mystery was hid in God, but now the believer is hid in God. Therefore, they are destined to be glorified. *Fourth*, in 3:4, he reveals the timing of the manifestations of their glory: *When Christ, who is our life, shall be manifested*, that is, the Second Coming, *then shall ye also with him be manifested in glory*. Thus, just as the mystery was glory manifested, so shall believers be manifested to the world in glory, meaning in their glorified state when believers return with Him. *Fifth*, the final goal of this hope of glory is that *Christ is all, and in all* (3:11).

Finally, in Colossians 1:28-29, Paul's aim was to proclaim this mystery with the power of the Lord, and the content of this mystery, the third mystery in relation to the Church, is the fact that the Messiah Himself indwells every believer.

d. The Mystery of the Church as the Bride of Messiah—Ephesians 5:22-33

The fifth mystery (which is the fourth mystery in connection with the Church) is the Mystery of the Church as the Bride of Messiah.

In verse 22, Paul admonishes that the wife is to be in subjection to the husband as she would be in subjection to the Lord. The means of showing subjection to God is subjection to the husband.

In verse 23, he makes a comparison and a contrast. The comparison is that the husband is the head of the wife just as the Messiah is the head of the Church. The contrast is this: the Messiah is the Savior of the Body, the Body being the union of Jewish and Gentile believers, which was the mystery of Ephesians. The husband, however, is not the savior of the wife, though he should be willing to protect her at the cost of his own life.

Paul makes another comparison in verse 24: the Church is subject to the Messiah, and so the wife should be subject to her husband in everything.

In verse 25, he again makes a comparison and a contrast. The comparison is that Messiah loves the Church, and so husbands are to love their wives. This, in fact, is the means of obtaining the submission of the wife. The husband is not to force his wife into submission but to love her into submission. The contrast is that while the Messiah gave Himself up for the Church, the husband cannot give himself up for his wife in a salvation sense. He can, however, do so in a loving and protective sense.

Paul then discusses the Messiah's present and future purpose for the Church in verses 26-27. The present purpose is that He might sanctify the Church (v. 26). The means of sanctification is *the washing of water with the word*, by means of the Word of God. The future aspect is in verse 27: *that he might present the church... a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing*, that she would *be holy and without blemish*. In II Corinthians 11:1-2, Paul states that his goal is to present the Church *as a pure virgin to Christ*. Revelation 19:6-8 states that eventually the sanctification process will be complete because on the Bride's wedding day, the only thing showing on the Bride will be *the righteous acts of the saints*.

In Ephesians 5:28-30, he again makes a comparison. The first comparison is that of love (v. 28). Even so, husbands also *love their own wives*

as their own bodies; the Messiah loves His Body, the Church, and the husband should love his wife. The reason for this is that the one who truly loves his wife, loves himself. In verse 29, Paul makes a comparison regarding maturing. The fact is, *no man ever hated his own flesh*, and the wife is his flesh; everyone *nourishes and cherishes* his own flesh. To "nourish" means to build up and to bring to completion. The husband is responsible to build up his wife and to mature her to completion. He must provide opportunity for her to develop all her skills and talents. To "cherish" means to provide tender, loving care; he must love her in a tender way. The comparison is, *even as Christ also the Church*; the Messiah cherishes the Church, loves the Church, nourishes her and brings her to full sanctification. The basis for this is because we are members of His Body, the Body being the Church (v. 30). As husband and wife are both members of His Body, Messiah is nourishing and cherishing this Body; therefore, the husband should also nourish and cherish his body, and the wife is his body (I Cor. 7:1-7).

In verse 31, Paul quotes Genesis 2:24: *for this cause* [for the purpose of verses 28-30] *shall a man leave his father and mother and shall cleave to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh*. For the husband to nourish and cherish his wife, then, is to love and not hate his own flesh.

Finally, in verse 32, Paul reveals the content of the mystery. The declaration is that this mystery is great. Paul states: *I speak in regard of Christ and of the church*. In other words, the Church as the Bride of Messiah is the mystery. In the Old Testament, Israel is portrayed as the Wife of Jehovah, so this cannot be the mystery. The mystery is the fact that the Church is the Bride of Messiah. That is the mystery now revealed in the New Testament for the first time. Israel is the Wife in relation to God the Father; the Church is the Bride and wife in relation to God the Son.[1]

Verse 33 contains the writer's conclusion. For the husband: *Nevertheless, ye also severally love each one his own wife even as himself*. For the wife: *let the wife see that she fear her husband*.

---

[1] See Appendix III, The Wife of Jehovah and the Bride of Messiah.

e. The Mystery of the Translation—I Corinthians 15:50-58

The sixth mystery (the fifth mystery in connection with the Church) is the Mystery of the Translation as contained in I Corinthians 15:50-58.

In verse 51, Paul declares: *Behold, I tell you a mystery*. The Second Coming of the Messiah is not a mystery, for it was something well revealed in the Old Testament. In fact, there are more details about the Second Coming in the Old than the New Testament. Furthermore, the resurrection of the dead is also revealed in the Old Testament, so that is not a mystery either. Rather, the content of the mystery is found in verses 51-52. Paul states: *we all shall not sleep*, meaning all will not die. Paul continues, *but we shall all be changed*. He emphasizes the quickness of this change in two ways: *in a moment* and *in the twinkling of an eye*. This will occur *at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed*. In verse 53, Paul describes the change: *this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality*.

The content of the mystery is that there is going to be a generation of believers who will enter into eternity without first passing through the gates of death. This was not revealed anywhere in the Old Testament. The fact that this facet is the mystery would also imply that the Rapture itself is part of the mystery and, therefore, it is one of the reasons one must distinguish between the Rapture of the Church and the Second Coming. The Second Coming is not a mystery; the Rapture with its translation is a mystery unrevealed in the Old Testament, and is one of the many reasons for Pretribulationism.

3. The Mystery of Israel's Hardening

a. Romans 9:1-11:36

The seventh mystery is the Mystery of Israel's Hardening. To fully understand this mystery, is will be necessary to survey all of Romans 9-11.

(1) The Theology of Israel's Rejection—Romans 9:1-29

In Romans 9:1-5, Paul discusses two things: his sorrow and Israel's privileges. He writes of his sorrow (vv. 1-3), saying that his conscience and the Holy Spirit bear witness to it; this method of using two witnesses to establish something (his sorrow) is a concept from the Law. Paul's great sorrow, in turn, has caused him physical pain (v. 2). The content of Paul's sorrow is that he was willing to be lost for eternity if it meant Israel's salvation (v. 3). But he knew that could not be, that he could not die on Israel's behalf. He then describes Israel's privileges (vv. 4-5), listing eight: *first*, the adoption, referring to Israel's national adoption as the national son of God (Ex. 4:22-23); *second*, the glory, the *Shechinah* Glory, the visible evidence of God's presence; *third*, the covenants, the four unconditional covenants God made with Israel (Abrahamic Covenant, Palestinian or Land Covenant, Davidic Covenant, New Covenant); *fourth*, Law-giving, i.e., the Mosaic Covenant and the Mosaic Law; *fifth*, the service of God, which is the entire Levitical system; *sixth*, the promises, specifically, the messianic promises; *seventh*, the fathers, the Patriarchs—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and *eighth*, Israel was given the Messiah Himself. Of the Messiah, Paul says three things: As to His nationality, He is a Jew; as to His sovereignty, He is over all; as to His deity, He is God blessed forever.

In 9:6-13, Paul discusses to Israel's rejection of the Messiah in light of biblical history. He begins by pointing out that there are two Israels (v. 6): There is Israel the whole, including all Jews, all the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; then there is the Remnant of Israel, that minority segment of the Jewish population who are believers. In 9:7-13, he presents two illustrations: Ishmael and Isaac (vv. 7-9), and Esau and Jacob (vv. 10-13). Through these two illustrations, he makes four points: *first*, although Israel has failed, God's Word has not and, in fact, all is going according to God's plan; *second*, spiritual blessings do not come on the basis of physical descent or personal merit, but only to those physical descendants who believe—and only those physical descendants who believe are Abraham's real spiritual children; *third*, the spiritual blessings come by the grace of God solely through the will of God; and *fourth*, physical descent alone will not obtain these promises, only physical descent and its spiritual appropriation will obtain them, meaning one must be both physically and spiritually Jewish. To conclude this section,

Paul is not saying that the Church has replaced Israel. Rather, his point is that the Remnant of Israel has obtained these promises, while the rest of Israel has not.

In 9:14-29, Paul deals with Israel's rejection in light of specific biblical principles. He raises two questions and answers them individually. The *first* question, in 9:14-18 is: *Is there unrighteousness with God?* Is God unrighteous because He grants mercy only on that part of Israel that believes and not on all Israel? His response is fourfold: *first*, *God forbid* (v. 14), may it never be, perish the thought; *second*, God can show mercy to whomsoever He wills; *third*, he emphasizes God's sovereignty (v. 17), God is absolutely free in His dealings with men; and *fourth*, he draws his conclusion (v. 18), saying God will have mercy on whom He will. Therefore, God has the absolute sovereign right to extend His mercy to whom He chooses, and He has chosen to extend it only to those of Israel who believe. Verses 19-29 contain the *second* question and answer. The question, in verse 19, is: Why does God find fault? He answers, giving the illustration of the potter and the clay (vv. 20-21); his point is that if God did not elect, none would be saved because none seek God. He also states that men are not hardened so that they can be lost; they are hardened because they already are lost. In verses 22-23, he makes the application of the illustration. Using the Greek middle voice, he states that vessels of wrath *fit themselves* for destruction (v. 22). Then, using the Greek passive voice in verse 23, vessels of mercy *are made fit* for salvation. In other words, unbelievers make themselves fit for judgment, while God makes believers fit for salvation. In verse 24, the writer introduces the principle that God has called both Jews and Gentiles. Heretofore, he has been dealing with two groups of Jews, the Remnant and the non-Remnant, or Jews who believe and Jews who do not believe. Now he states that among the Gentiles, God has also fitted some for salvation. Once again, the mystery concerns the Gentiles. Paul draws his conclusion in 9:25-29. Vessels of mercy are also found among the Gentiles (25-26); on the other hand, a great portion of Israel has become vessels of wrath, although there is still a remnant within Israel (27-29).

Three points serve to summarize this section: *first*, Israel's rejection of the Messiah did not catch God by surprise, for it was part of God's divine plan; *second*, because of Israel's rejection, mercy was extended to the Gentiles; and *third*, this was not to the exclusion of the Jews, for

there is still a remnant.

(2) The Explanation of Israel's Rejection—Romans 9:30-10:21

The second main division gives the explanation for Israel's rejection. This section comprises four subdivisions. The first discusses Israel's stumbling and the remaining give three reasons why Israel stumbled, based on three lines of ignorance.

In the first subdivision, he describes the stumbling of the people (9:30-33). In verse 30, the Gentiles have attained righteousness because they came on the basis of faith. In verses 31-32a, Israel failed to attain righteousness because they tried to obtain it by the works of the Law. Finally, the cause of their stumbling is the Messianic Stone which means salvation is by grace through faith in Him apart from the works of the Law (vv. 32b-33).

The second subdivision discusses Israel's ignorance of the channel of salvation (10:1-11). He begins by describing his own desire (v. 1): that Israel might be saved. The reason (v. 2) is that he knows *that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge*. They failed to distinguish between legal righteousness and faith righteousness. In verses 3-5, he describes legal righteousness: trying to attain righteousness by the works of the Law. They ended up being ignorant of two things. *First*: they had misconstrued the purpose of the Law and so they were ignorant of God's righteousness, which was salvation by grace through faith. *Second*: they were ignorant that the Messiah was the end of the Law, since the Law ended with the Messiah's death. The result was that they tried to establish their own righteousness by the works of the Law. In verses 6-11, he describes faith righteousness, noting that it is not attainable by human effort (vv. 6-7). Rather, the means is faith (v. 8), and the one essential is belief (vv. 9-11): one must believe the confession that Jesus is the Messiah (vv. 9-10). He then draws the conclusion: faith is the only way of attaining God's righteousness and salvation (v. 11). The ignorance here was that the purpose of the Law was never a means of salvation, but a rule of life for those already saved.

The third subdivision discusses Israel's ignorance of the universal character of salvation (vv. 12-13). He points out that God is the *Lord of all*, both Jews and Gentiles (v. 12). If salvation is free, it must be universal to both Jews and Gentiles; so all may be saved, meaning both Jews and Gentiles. Then, *whosoever* [meaning Jew or Gentile] *calls upon the name*

of the Lord shall be saved (v. 13). The ignorance here was based on the previous ignorance. Believing the Law was a means of salvation, and knowing that God gave the Law only to Israel and not to the Gentiles, they concluded that God intended only to save Jews and not Gentiles.

In the fourth subdivision, Paul discusses Israel's ignorance of the universal preaching of the gospel (10:14-21). He begins by spelling out the chain of preaching (vv. 14-15). As salvation is universal, without distinction, it should have been preached without distinction. He developes a logical progression as follows: there is no calling upon the name of the Lord without faith; furthermore, there is no faith without hearing, meaning one must know what the content of faith is, i.e, what to believe; moreover, there is no hearing without preaching; and finally, there is no preaching without sending. He then points out that the message was heard, though Israel failed to submit to the gospel message (v. 16). He reaffirms that faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God (v. 17). Continuing this thought (v. 18), he notes that the Jewish people had the Word of God and, thus, the message; they heard the message, but failed to respond to the message. In addition, he states that the Old Testament anticipated that a message would go out to the Gentiles, and that many Gentiles would believe (vv. 19-20). He concludes that even though Israel rejected the Messiah, God loves her still and keeps His arms open, waiting to receive Israel still (v. 21). This third ignorance resulted from the second one and the second resulted from the first. Assuming God only intended to save Jews, they did not send missionaries to the Gentiles.

(3) The Consolation of Israel's Rejection—Romans 11:1-36

Romans 11:1-32 contains the third main division, the consolation of Israel's rejection. Here, Paul begins moving toward this mystery.

His first point, in verses 1-10, is that Israel's rejection of the Messiah is not total. He begins with a question (v. 1): *Did God cast off His people?* The answer is threefold: first, *God forbid*, may it never be, perish the thought; second, Paul's own salvation shows that God did not cast off the Jews; and third, God's foreknowledge of His people, the fact that He foreknew His people and then chose His people, shows that God did not cast off His people (v. 2a). As further evidence (vv. 2b-6), he cites the Remnant of Israel doctrine, dealing with both the past and the present. The past (vv. 2b-4) shows that

God has always had a remnant which was a minority. The fact of only a minority in the Old Testament did not mean, then, that God had cast off Israel. Regarding the present (vv. 5-6), he makes the application (v. 5): Today, *also there is a remnant according to the election of grace*. True, only a minority are believing today, but this shows that God did not cast off His people. On the contrary, it is evidence that He has retained His people. The basis (v. 6) is by grace and not by works. He then draws the logical conclusion (v. 7): *What then?* That which Israel the whole sought, which was righteousness, it did not obtain. However, the elect, the Remnant of Israel, did obtain it. The rest, the non-Remnant, were hardened. This is the first hint of the mystery: that it in some way concerns the hardening of Israel. He provides the evidence of the present hardening of Israel by quoting from the Old Testament (vv. 8-10), which shows that the present hardening of Israel itself was not the mystery.

In verses 11-15, he describes the purpose of Israel's stumbling. The question (v. 11) is: *Did they stumble that they might fall?* Paul did say earlier (9:30-33) that Israel stumbled. But now he asks the question: Was this stumbling for an irrevocable fall from which Israel could not rise again? The answer (v. 11) is: *God forbid*, "may it never be!" "Perish the thought!" The fact is that *by their fall*, salvation has come to the Gentiles. The purpose of this Gentile salvation is to provoke the Jews to jealousy. In 11:1-10, Paul stated there was still a remnant of Israel today. Now he points out that the Remnant today came to faith principally by means of being provoked to jealousy by Gentile believers. In verse 12, Paul draws a contrast between the partial and the fullness. The partial is that there is today a reduction of the nation to a remnant of believers. The fullness is that in the future, there will be a national salvation of Israel as a whole. This is the second hint of the mystery: that there is a connection between the fulness of Israel and the fulness of the Gentiles. Note, however, that the national salvation of Israel was not itself the mystery. In verses 13-14, Paul then reiterates the purpose of Gentile salvation. Israel's stumbling was for Gentile salvation, but the purpose of Gentile salvation is Jewish salvation. Therefore, Paul glorifies his ministry at being the Apostle of the Gentiles; the more Gentiles who come to faith, the more there will be to provoke the Jews to jealousy and, therefore, that many more Jews will come to believe. In verse 15, he discusses the *casting away* and the *receiving*: The *cast-*

ing away brought about direct reconciliation of the Gentile world; the *receiving* of the Jewish people will mean life from the dead. It is a typical rabbinic argument, i.e., from the lesser to the greater. In other words, by Israel's fall, salvation has gone out to the Gentiles, so the Gentiles have received a great measure of blessing because of Israel's stumbling; but if Israel's stumbling brought so much blessing to the Gentiles, how much more, then, will the Gentiles be blessed by Israel's return, Israel's *fullness*. It will mean life from the dead; it will mean the Second Coming; and it will mean the Messianic Kingdom. Here is the third hint of the mystery: there is some kind of a correlation between Gentile salvation and Jewish salvation.

Just before actually revealing the mystery, Paul gives his famous illustration of the Olive Tree (11:16-24). He begins in verse 16 with the illustration and the principle. The twofold illustration compares the firstfruits to the lump, and also the root to the branches. The firstfruit and the root are the Patriarchs and the Abrahamic Covenant. The lump and the branches refer to Israel as a nation. The principle behind Romans 11:16 is that of Numbers 15:17-21: The holiness of the root is passed on to the branches, and the consecration of the firstfruits is passed on to the lump. Just as the firstfruits sanctify the whole harvest (lump), even so, some day all Israel will be sanctified. The Abrahamic Covenant made with the Patriarchs is the basis for the future national salvation of Israel. Moving from the firstfruits/lump and root/branches, he then deals with the Olive Tree itself (vv. 17-24). The Olive Tree represents the place of spiritual blessings (v. 17). The Olive Tree does not represent Israel; the Jewish people are represented by the natural branches. The Olive Tree does not represent the Gentiles; the Gentiles are represented by the wild olive branches. The Olive Tree represents the place of spiritual blessing, and the Gentiles have become partakers with the Jewish believers of Jewish spiritual blessings. This is the mystery of the Book of Ephesians. The point of verse 17, then, is that Jewish and Gentile believers are partaking of the spiritual blessings of the Jewish covenants. That leads to his warning in verses 18-22. The Gentile blessing is on the basis of faith, not merit. The Gentiles can also be removed from the place of blessing. These verses deal with the nationality of Jews and Gentiles, not individual salvation; he is not discussing individual loss of salvation, but that Jews and Gentiles can be removed from the place of bless-

ing. In verses 23-24, Paul prophesies Israel's eventual restoration. He points out that God has the ability to graft natural branches back into the tree (v. 23). The reason this should be anticipated is (v. 24): That it is Israel's Olive Tree. He states that if God grafted wild olive branches *contrary to nature into a good olive tree*, He can certainly do the more natural thing of grafting natural branches back into the tree. The reason for this is that this tree belongs to Israel; it is *their own* olive tree, the covenantal blessings that belong to the Jewish people. Furthermore, the regrafting is the expectation. It should be anticipated that there will be a regrafting of Israel back into the tree. Now, the mystery will show how this will happen.

Finally, in Romans 11:25-32, Paul comes to the mystery itself. Verse 25 contains the content of the mystery, beginning with why they need to know: *first*, he does not want them to be *ignorant*; and *second*, he does not want them to be *conceited*. What they need to know is twofold: *first*, the hardening of Israel is partial, as he has already shown that there is still a remnant; *second*, this hardening is temporary. It is temporary up *until*—this is the key word—*until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in*. The content of this mystery, then, is *that a hardening in part has befallen Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in*. The mystery is not the fact of Israel's national salvation; this is already known from the Old Testament. The mystery is not the fact of Israel's unbelief or hardening; this is also known from the Old Testament. The mystery is that of a partial, temporary hardening of Israel until a full, set number of Gentiles is reached, and this is something that was not revealed anywhere in the Old Testament. The Greek word for *fullness* means a "set number," and Paul's point is that God has a set number of Gentiles He intends to bring into the Body. Again, this was the mystery of Ephesians: Jews and Gentiles. Once the set number is reached, then that facet of the mystery is complete; this will complete the purpose of Gentile salvation, the purpose of Acts 15:14, to call out from among the Gentiles *a people for His name*. Then, in verses 26-27, the Apostle notes the future national salvation of Israel. He clearly states, *and so all Israel shall be saved* (26a). This is Israel's *fullness* of verse 12. However, *all Israel* does not mean "all Israel of all time," but all Israel following *the fullness of the Gentiles*. This itself is not the mystery, but it will follow the mystery. Paul proves this from the Old Testament (vv. 26b-27). Again, the mystery is not Israel's national salvation, but,

rather, the temporary hardening that has taken place *until* the fullness of the Gentiles. Upon the fullness of the Gentiles, and following this mystery, then all Israel will be saved. In verses 28-29, Israel's present status during the mystery is described, starting with a contrast in verse 28: *As touching the gospel, they are enemies for your sake*, meaning for the sake of Gentile salvation, the hardened element has become the enemies of the gospel, *but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sake*—the *election* refers to Israel's national election, and *the fathers* to the Patriarchs and the Abrahamic Covenant. For these reasons, Israel's election and covenantal promises, there must some day be a national salvation. The basis, in verse 29, is that *the gifts and the calling of God* are irrevocable. The *calling* is Israel's national election; the *gifts* are the covenantal promises, one of which is the national salvation of Israel. In verses 30-32, he spells out the principle of the calling out of the Gentiles and Israel's national salvation, in that unbelief has given God the opportunity to reveal His mercy, not on the deserving but on the undeserving. In the past, the Gentiles were disobedient, but now have obtained mercy because of Jewish disobedience (v. 30). Now Israel is in disobedience, and can also obtain mercy by the mercy shown to the Gentiles, in that the Gentiles can provoke Jews to jealousy (v. 31). Finally (v. 32), *God has shut up all unto disobedience, that He might have mercy upon all*, both Jews and Gentiles.

Paul concludes this section with his famous doxology in verses 33-36.

b. Romans 16:25-27

Later, in Romans 16:25-27, Paul continues with the mystery of Israel's hardening, dealing initially with the foundation of spiritual growth (vv. 25-26a): *Now unto Him who is able to establish you.* Paul says God will establish them in three ways: first, *according to my gospel*, Paul's gospel (good news) being the mystery that was revealed to him—the gospel of growth; second, *the preaching of Jesus Christ*, i.e., the gospel of salvation; and third, *according to the revelation of the mystery*, which in the past has *been kept in silence through times eternal but now is manifested by the Scriptures of the prophets*, meaning the New Testament Apostles and prophets. Paul was commanded by God to reveal the mystery: *according to the commandment of the eternal God.* Finally (vv. 26b-27), he deals with the content of the mystery. He says it *is made known unto all the Gentiles unto the obedience of*

faith (v. 26); in other words, the mystery of 11:25, which was unrevealed in eternity past, has now come to the Gentiles, and Gentile salvation is taking place until the fullness comes. The object of the faith is *the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever* (v. 27). In this passage, Paul is simply summarizing the seventh mystery spoken of earlier in the same Epistle.

4. The Mystery of the Seven Climactic Judgments and the Defeat of the Two Satanic Mysteries

The eighth mystery deals with the conflict and the defeat of the two satanic mysteries. The eighth mystery is the Mystery of Seven Climactic Judgments which will destroy the satanic mystery.

a. The First Satanic Mystery: The Mystery of Babylon—Revelation 17:1-18

In 17:1-6, John sees a vision of the religious system of the first half of the Tribulation. In verses 1-2, the angel declares to the Apostle John that he is about to be given a new revelation above and beyond what he saw through the first sixteen chapters. By the end of Revelation 16, he has received revelation through the end of the Tribulation, all the way through the Campaign of Armageddon and its consequences. In chapters 17-18, he is given new revelation, featuring further information about the events of the first half (ch. 17) and second half (ch. 18) of the Tribulation. Furthermore, in chapters 19-22, he will discuss the Second Coming, the Kingdom, and the Eternal Order. He hears an angelic declaration of a new revelation (17:1-2), and in verse one, the new revelation is that of *the great harlot*. The angel says, *I will show you the judgment of the great harlot*. A more modern term for *harlot* is "prostitute." As a verb, "to prostitute" something is to take something that has a proper use and use it in an improper way. A prostitute, of course, does this with the sexual act. Sex has a legitimate purpose within marriage, but the prostitute takes that which has a legitimate purpose and uses it in an illegitimate way. In this passage, the *harlot* does the same with religion. There is a proper use of religion, as James points out (Jas. 1:27): True religion is to visit the fatherless and take care of the widows; true religion is taking on the role of a servant;

true biblical religion means servanthood, service, serving people who have needs and meeting their needs. However, when religion is prostituted, it moves from the position of servanthood to the position of lordship, where it begins to rule. That is what happens in Revelation 17: the harlot prostitutes religion and moves it from its legitimate use, which is serving, to an illegitimate use, which is ruling. Throughout the Old Testament, idolatry was viewed as spiritual fornication and spiritual adultery (Hos. 1-3; Jer. 2:20; 3:1-9; Ezek. 16:15-41; 23:5-44). Furthermore, in this verse, the harlot *sits upon many waters*; verse 15 defines *many waters*: it represents the population of the world. She sits, then, upon the population of the world, which means she rules over the religious affairs of the world. That is how she has prostituted religion—from a position of service and serving to a position of ruling and authority. The passage goes on to describe her fornication with the kings of the earth (17:2). This is a union of religion and state that results in mutual corruption, corruption of the religious sphere, as well as the political sphere.

In verses 3-6, John receives the revelation of the harlot. Verse three points out that the woman rules with the support of civil government. In the first half of the Tribulation, when the world is ruled by ten kings over ten nations, these ten kings will be supporters of this one-world religious system. The woman rules with the support of civil government. Verse three states three things: *first*, the harlot sits on a *scarlet-colored beast*, which represents the Fourth Gentile Empire and is the same as the fourth Beast of the Book of Daniel; *second*, she has names full of *blasphemy*, showing she is in opposition to the true God and that this is a false religious system; *third*, the Beast has *seven heads and ten horns*, describing the governmental system of the first half of the Tribulation. In verse four, John describes her as being both wealthy (*decked with gold*) and influential. She is also guilty of spiritual fornication, because she has in her hand *a golden cup full of abominations, even the unclean things of her fornication*. She is the counterfeit bride of the Messiah. In verse five, he finally comes to the point of the revelation of the mystery: her full name is *Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of the Harlots and of the Abominations of the Earth*. Here, he describes *Babylon the Great* as *the Mother of Harlots*, meaning that Babylon is the originator of idolatry and, therefore, of spiritual fornication. The origin is the city of Babylon, and the term *the Mother of Harlots*

means that Babylon is where idolatry and spiritual fornication began, something clearly affirmed by the Book of Genesis. Genesis 10:8-12 deals with Nimrod the empire builder. Verses 8-9 describe him as *the mighty hunter*, and in verse ten, he first built the city of Babylon and the nation of Babylonia. Verses 11-12 state that he eventually left Babylonia for Assyria and built Nineveh without stating why he left Babylon. But Genesis 11:1-9, which gives the account of the Tower of Babel, shows why Nimrod left Babylon for Assyria and Nineveh. Babel is Babylon (in Hebrew it is the same word), which was built by Nimrod. The Tower of Babel (Babylon) itself was built for astrological purposes. Here, then, is the first real mention of idolatry; therefore, indeed, *Babylon the Great* is the *Mother of Harlots*. God judged the Tower of Babel in Babylon with the confusion of tongues or languages, forcing a dispersion of the people; it was this confusion of tongues that forced Nimrod to move from Babel or Babylon to Assyria, where he built Nineveh. In Revelation 17:6, the writer moves on to describe the persecution of the saints, pointing out that this false religious system will be the persecutor of the believers in the Messiah in the first half of the Tribulation: the harlot was *drunken with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.* The saints she kills are the fifth-seal saints of Revelation 6:9-11.

Verses 7-14 proceed to describe the government supporting the religious system. He again says what the mystery is (v. 7): *I will tell you the mystery of the woman*. The mystery is not Babylon itself, nor is the mystery the fact that Babylon was the originator and center of idolatry; this is already known from the Old Testament. The mystery is the fact that Babylon will develop into a one-world unified religion, and will rule the world religiously for the first half of the Tribulation. It will be headquartered and based in the city of Babylon; it will be supported by the governments of that day; and it will be the primary persecutor of believers who will not submit to its religious authority. All of this was totally unrevealed in the Old Testament.

Wrapping up a few thoughts about the first satanic mystery, John describes the governmental system supporting the religious Babylon (17:7b-14). Without going into all the details (covered earlier in this book),[2] the

[2] See Chapter 2, The Times of the Gentiles.

world government during the first half of the Tribulation is that of ten kings ruling co-equally over ten kingdoms. In the middle of the Tribulation, all the other kings will turn their authority over to the Antichrist, who will then rule the world for the second half of the Tribulation. The Antichrist's rule will terminate with the Second Coming.

In verse 15, John interprets the meaning of the many *waters* over which the great harlot rules, saying it refers to the world population. Again, in prostituting the religion, the harlot moved from serving to ruling, and rules the world population for the first half of the Tribulation.

Verses 16-17 go on to describe the destruction of Mystery Babylon. The world religious system of the first half of the Tribulation will be destroyed in the middle of the Tribulation by the Antichrist and his allied kings (v. 16). Unknowingly, they carry out God's will in the matter (v. 17). The destruction of Mystery Babylon sets the stage for the second satanic mystery and the eighth divine mystery.

Finally, in verse 18, it is stated that the headquarters of Mystery Babylon will be the city of Babylon. Chapter 18 then details the destruction of the city itself as part of the Campaign of Armageddon at the end of the Tribulation.

b. The Second Satanic Mystery: The Mystery of Lawlessness and the Lawless One—II Thessalonians 2:1-12

Paul opens this passage with the general topic of the return of the Lord. In verse one, Paul writes, *touching the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him*. These are general terms concerning eschatology and doctrines of the Second Coming. He will now shift from the general to the specific.

The specific problem is stated in verse two. Paul is writing *to the end*, for the purpose, *that ye be not quickly shaken from your mind, nor yet be troubled*. The purpose of II Thessalonians two is to ease their minds, because their minds have been shaken. He states: "Do not let your minds be shaken" in one of three ways: *either by spirit*, something out of the angelic demonic realm; *or by word*, any verbal news; *or by epistle as from us*, any written news that claims to be from Paul. Apparently, someone had been circulating an epistle, falsely claiming that Paul had written it. In these ways, the Church had been told *that the day of the Lord is just at hand*. The *day of the*

Lord is the most common biblical term for the Great Tribulation. The false teaching that had shaken them was the idea that they were already in the Tribulation, or shortly would be. This had shaken them because Paul clearly taught them Pretribulationism (I Thes. 4-5), but now, essentially, someone came along and began teaching them Posttribulationism.

In verse three, he proceeds to give the evidence against Posttribulationism, beginning with an exhortation: *let no man beguile you in any wise*; in other words, "Do not let anyone deceive you." Then he states: *for it will not be*, meaning the Tribulation cannot happen until two other things come before it: *first*, there must be the *falling away*, or the apostasy; *second*, *the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition*, a statement that offers the first hint of the second satanic mystery.

In verse four, he states two things about the actions of the Antichrist: *first*, he will *oppose and exalt himself against all that is called God or that is worshipped*; *second*, he will sit in the Temple of God, setting himself up as God. Note that these actions themselves cannot be the mystery, because this was already known from the Old Testament, particularly the Book of Daniel. These actions will come after the Antichrist destroys Mystery Babylon. He will then take over the Jewish Temple, seat himself there, proclaim himself to be God Almighty, and call upon the whole world to worship him as god. But all these things are known from the Old Testament, so this is not the mystery.

In verse five, he gives them a reminder: *Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?* They need to remember what Paul taught them when he was with them; if they do, then they will not be so quickly shaken. By way of application, believers must remember what the Bible teaches so that they, too, are not quickly shaken or tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine.

In verse six, he makes the point that the time is not yet. He states: *And now ye know that which restrains*; they know that there is something restraint; they know it because this was part of Paul's oral teaching to them that he mentioned back in verse five. He continues: *to the end that he may be revealed in his own season*. In other words, a restraint is now present. As long as the restraint is present, the man of sin cannot take over the Temple and cannot declare himself to be god. This is the second hint of this mystery.

In verse seven, he finally states the content of the mystery: *For the mystery of lawlessness does already work*. In other words, Satan has a program of lawlessness, and this is Satan's counterfeit mystery. This is the demonic gospel. The divine mystery meant submission to the commands or will of God. The satanic mystery, a program of lawlessness, is in opposition to God's laws. By means of this program of lawlessness, Satan intends to bring to world power the lawless one. This is the antithesis to God's purpose to bring His Son to rule an ordered world. The point of the mystery, then, is that the Antichrist will not come to power in a lawful manner (as did Adolf Hitler, who was lawfully elected, but then became a dictator). The Antichrist will come to world power by totally lawless means. While the Old Testament did reveal that the Antichrist will become a world ruler, it did not reveal this mystery: that there is a present restraining of lawlessness, but eventually the restraining will cease and by means of lawlessness Satan will bring to power *the lawless one*. Elaborating, Paul writes of the present time: *only there is one that restrains now* to keep lawlessness from taking full control; but in the future, *until he be taken out of the way*, lawlessness will bring in *the lawless one*.

Continuing to deal with *the lawless one* in verses 8-10, he gives the revelation (v. 8): *then shall be revealed the lawless one*. This revelation will be signaled when the Antichrist assumes control of the Jewish Temple and commits the Abomination of Desolation, an event that will happen in the middle of the Tribulation (Dan. 9:27; 12:11; Mat. 24:15; Rev. 11:1-2). This follows the destruction of Mystery Babylon, and here is another elaboration of the mystery: The worship of the Antichrist will replace the worship of Mystery Babylon as the world religious system, and this new world religious system will be the religion of the second half of the Tribulation.

The next portion of verse eight states that by Messiah's simple declaration—just one word—the Antichrist will fall dead at His feet: *Whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his mouth*. The timing of it is at *the manifestation of his coming*, at the Second Coming; this, in turn, will set the stage for the final defeat of the satanic mystery.

Satan's energizing work is described in verse nine: The Antichrist's coming *is according to the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders*. Satan is clearly the source of the Antichrist's power. A failure to understand this very nature of the satanic mystery will result

in one's being open to deception by the satanic mystery and satanic miracles. Notice the phrase, *powers and signs and lying wonders*. It is the same terminology used of God's true miracles. It is crucial, then, to clearly understand the deceptive nature of the satanic mystery.

Verse ten specifies the goal of the satanic mystery: the work of deception. He says, *with all deceit of unrighteousness for them that perish*, referring to the unbelievers. The reason is because *they received not the love of the truth*; this refers to people who rejected the gospel proclaimed to them in the first half of the Tribulation. The gospel will be proclaimed in the first half of the Tribulation by the 144,000 Jews of Revelation seven, by the Two Witnesses of Revelation 11, and by the angelic voice speaking from the atmosphere in Revelation 14:6-7. Everyone, therefore, will have heard the gospel at least two or three times before the Antichrist declares himself to be god. It is those who reject the preaching of the gospel in the first half of the Tribulation, having heard it at least twice, who are now deceived by the satanic mystery and, therefore, worship the Antichrist, take his mark, and reach the point of no return. They will have rejected the gospel by which they might be saved.

Instead of salvation, they fall under the judgment of God (vv. 11-12). Verse 11 describes the great delusion: *And for this cause,* meaning, because they already rejected the message of the truth, *God sends them a working of error*. The error is the mystery of lawlessness bringing in the lawless one, and they are deceived by the counterfeit miracles, signs, and wonders. This is all part of the second facet of the satanic mystery. The result is that instead of being saved, they will now believe a lie; the lie they will believe is that the Antichrist is truly God; and they will come to believe it because of the miracles, signs and wonders that Satan is able to do through the Antichrist and his false prophet.

In verse 12, Paul writes of the divine judgment: *they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness*. Again, they have reached a point of no return, because to accept the Antichrist is to accept the Mark of the Beast ("666" according to Rev. 13:16-18); and to take the Mark is to forfeit any opportunity to be saved (Rev. 14:9-12). It is not hearing the gospel before the Rapture and rejecting it that is the point of no return. It is taking the Mark of the Beast that is the point of no return.

This, then, is the second satanic mystery: that lawlessness is being

restrained until the restraint itself is removed, when lawlessness will take over and bring in the lawless one.

c. The Eighth Divine Mystery: the Defeat of the Satanic Mysteries

(1) Revelation 10:1-7

In 10:1-2, John sees the vision of the angel with a little scroll: The angel of Revelation reflects the *Shechinah* Glory (v. 1), and he carries the little scroll (v. 2), the second scroll mentioned in the Book of Revelation. The first scroll (ch. 5) contained the Seven Seals; six of them were the Seal Judgments of chapter six, and the seventh seal contained the Seven Trumpet Judgments, six of which occurred in chapters 8-9. There is one more trumpet left to sound (ch. 11). Meanwhile, here in chapter ten, the stage is set for the next mystery. The content of the little scroll deals with this mystery, soon to be revealed.

In verses 3-4, *the seven thunders* reveal something to John that he clearly understood (v. 3); he was about to write this down when he was told not to do so (v. 4), because this revelation was intended for John's ears only.

The mystery itself is in Revelation 10:5-7, with the announcement of the results of the seventh trumpet. Verses 5-6 describe a solemn oath to show the divine importance and solemnity of this mystery. The specific content of the mystery is found in verse seven:

> *But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, then is finished the mystery of God, according to the good tidings which he declared to his servants the prophets.*

With the seventh trumpet, the mystery of God is *finished*. The seventh trumpet will contain the seven Bowl Judgments. Note the phrase, *in the days of*; this phrase shows that the seventh trumpet is not a singular judgment, but a process by which the *mystery of God* is *finished*. It is a process because it is a series of judgments, like the seventh seal was a process. The seventh seal was the process of the Seven Trumpet Judgments, and the seventh trumpet is the process of the Seven Bowl Judgments. Thus, the content of the little scroll is information regarding the seventh Trumpet Judgment and the subsequent Bowl Judgments. John states it is *according to the good*

tidings which he declared to his servants the prophets. The Old Testament prophets revealed a period of the wrath of God that will then lead to the Kingdom, and so this is not the mystery. The mystery is that there will be a series of seven climactic judgments that will destroy the satanic mystery of the man of sin. This was not revealed in the Old Testament.

(2) Revelation 11:15-19

This passage continues the theme of the seventh trumpet, which, again, brings to an end the mystery of God. In verse 15, the seventh angel finally sounds, and this is followed by a declaration: *The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of the Lord and of his Christ*, the result of the seventh trumpet. The kingdom of the world becomes the Kingdom of the Messiah, but this is also the result of the Seven Bowl Judgments, showing that the seventh Trumpet Judgment contains the Seven Bowl Judgments.

Verses 16-18 record the praise to God by the twenty-four elders. They praise God because the Messiah will now take the power of the Kingdom, which includes the wrath of God upon the Gentile world.

Verse 19 deals with events in Heaven just before the Bowl Judgments are poured out, and these events in Heaven focus on the Temple in Heaven. Verse 19 is a short prelude to the Bowl Judgments, and this prelude is then dropped until chapter 15. Chapters 12-14 are a large, parenthetical section, adding further details to the events of the middle and the second half of the Tribulation.

(3) Revelation 15:1-16:21

Resuming the topic of the Seven Bowl Judgments in Revelation 15-16, he introduces the Bowl Judgments (15:1): they are *the last, for in them is finished the wrath of God*. This is exactly what he said about the seventh trumpet. Just as the seventh trumpet brings to a close the mystery of the wrath of God, so do the Seven Bowl Judgments—showing again that the seventh trumpet merely contained the Seven Bowl Judgments.

Verses 2-4 contain a praise to God by the martyrs of the second half of the Tribulation.

The prelude in Heaven before the outpouring of the Seven Bowl Judgments is found in verses 5-8. Note here that the prelude in Heaven

focuses on the Temple, which was also true of the seventh trumpet and again shows the correlation. This is affirmed in 16:1, where the seven bowls are declared to be the *wrath of God*, a fact that was also true of the seventh trumpet.

The purpose is not to detail this chapter as the Seven Bowl Judgments are poured out, but to note certain points. *First*, in 16:2, those affected are those with the mark of the Beast. *Second*, also affected are the throne and kingdom of the Antichrist (vv. 10-11). *Third*, in 16:12-16, God's wrath also includes Armageddon, during which time the Antichrist will, indeed, fall.

With the seventh Bowl Judgment (16:17-21), there is a declaration: *It is finished*. He made the same declaration of the seventh trumpet, showing again that the seventh trumpet contained the Seven Bowl Judgments. Therefore, just as with the seventh trumpet *it is finished*, by the same token, with this last and seventh Bowl Judgment, it is indeed finished. That will lead to the final destruction of Babylon (v. 19), something detailed in chapter 18.

H. Conclusion: It Is Finished

The conclusion of this study can be summarized using these very same words: *It is finished*, because with the eighth divine mystery having conquered the two satanic mysteries, all other mysteries come together: *First*, the satanic mysteries are now destroyed forever; *second*, the Messianic Kingdom is established, and the Son is enthroned upon the Throne of David; *third*, this means that the Mystery Kingdom period ends, replaced by the Messianic Kingdom; *fourth*, the Mystery Church then co-reigns with the Messiah over the Messianic Kingdom; and *fifth*, the mystery of the fullness of the Gentiles is complete, meaning that all Israel is saved, and all Israel is restored to the Land. Finally, with the declaration, *it is finished*, all of the mysteries come together, and it *is* finished, indeed. What continues is the results of the divine mysteries. What is terminated are the satanic mysteries once and for all.

APPENDIX VII

Immortality

This study on immortality will be discussed in four major categories.

A. Definition

The meaning of immortality is: the eternal, continuous, and conscious existence of the soul after the death of the body. Physical death is the separation of the material part of man from the immaterial part of man. Immortality means "an eternal, continuous, and conscious existence of the immaterial part of man after the death of the body." Immortality means "continuous consciousness."

This study will use the term "immortality" in reference to its theological usage. Theologically, the term "immortality" refers to both the body or the material part of man, as well as the soul-spirit or the immaterial part of man. But to be technical, the biblical usage of the term is limited to the body only.

In I Corinthians 15:53-54, the Bible speaks of "putting on" immortality, and the body puts on immortality at the Rapture of the Church. For the dead believer, immortality is *put on* by means of resurrection, and for the living believer immortality is *put on* by translation. This will occur at the Rapture. So biblically speaking, the term "immortality" is used of the body only, but the theological use of the term is applied to both the body and the soul.

This discussion concerning immortality is concerned with the continuous consciousness of the soul-spirit or the immaterial part of man after physical death.

B. The Evidences of the Doctrine of Immortality

There are seventeen specific evidences for the Doctrine of Immortality, evidences that the Bible does teach continuous consciousness of the soul.

1. Gathered to His People

The first evidence of the Doctrine of Immortality is a figure of speech used in the Old Testament which relates to death: *gathered to his people*. The dead person is seen as joining a company that preceded him. For example, Genesis 25:8 states:

> *And Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years, and was gathered to his people.*

The same statement is made in Genesis 25:17 of Ishmael:

> *And these are the years of the life of Ishmael, a hundred and thirty and seven years: and he gave up the ghost and died, and was gathered unto his people.*

Notice that first, physical death takes place, Ishmael dies; then after death, he is seen as *gathered unto his people*, as joining a company that preceded him or that had gone on in advance.

Another example is in Genesis 35:29a:

> *And Isaac gave up the ghost, and died, and was gathered unto his people . . .*

The next example is from the life of Jacob, in Genesis 49:29:

> *And he charged them, and said unto them, I am to be gathered unto my people: bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, . . .*

The last example is in Genesis 49:33:

> *And when Jacob made an end of charging his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people.*

So in the first book of the Bible, after people die physically, they are said to be "gathered unto their people." They are seen as joining a company of whom they are conscious and who had preceded them. Some interpret this phrase to mean nothing more than being buried in the family cemetery. However, that would not be true of a person like Abraham whose family or clan cemetery was back in Haran.

2. Joined the Fathers

The second evidence for the Doctrine of Immortality is similar to the first: sometimes there is the expression of having "joined the fathers." One example of this is in Genesis 15:15:

> *But you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried in a good old age.*

The joining of the fathers precedes the burial itself.

A similar statement is made in Genesis 47:30a:

> *But when I sleep with my fathers, you shall carry me out of Egypt, and bury me in their burying-place.*

So the fact that one goes to join his fathers is also an implication that consciousness continues even after physical death.

3. The Continuous Existence of Enoch

A third evidence for the Doctrine of Immortality is Enoch's continuous existence; he did not die, but has gone on to continually exist somewhere. In the Old Testament, this took place in Genesis 5:24, and this is reaffirmed in the New Testament by Hebrews 11:5.

4. The Assurance of Job

A fourth evidence for the Doctrine of Immortality is found in the Book of Job, which records Job's assurance based upon a question he himself raised and then answered. For example, in Job 14:14a the question is:

> *If a man die, shall he live again?*

And the question that Job raised in 14:14 is answered in Job 19:25-26:

> *But as for me I know that my Redeemer lives, And at last he will stand up upon the earth: And after my skin, even this body, is destroyed, Then without my flesh shall I see God; . . .*

Job had the assurance that even though his physical body will eventually go into physical death, nevertheless, he is going to see God apart from his body; that, too, is an evidence of immortality.

5. *The Doctrine of Resurrection*

The fifth evidence for the Doctrine of Immortality is based upon the Doctrine of Resurrection, because the very act of resurrection implies immortality. Otherwise, why even bother with resurrecting the dead, be they righteous or unrighteous? So contained within the very concept of resurrection is the implication of immortality. Why are they raised, but to live forever.

In the Old Testament, the Doctrine of Resurrection is taught in Isaiah 26:19; Daniel 12:2-3; and Hosea 13:14. In the New Testament, it is clearly taught in John 5:25-29, and Revelation 20:4-6, 11-15.

6. *The Consciousness of the Soul*

The sixth evidence for the Doctrine of Immortality is that, according to Scripture, the immaterial part of man is viewed as being with God upon death and is conscious. There are examples of this truth in both testaments. For example, in the Old Testament, this truth is found in Psalm 17:15:

> *As for me, I shall behold your face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with beholding your form.*

Here David expressed a real faith that the soul will still be conscious in the fellowship with God even after death.

This is also taught in Psalm 73:23-25:

> *Nevertheless I am continually with you: You have holden my right hand. You will guide me with your counsel, And afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides you.*

In this Psalm, the author Asaph expressed a real faith in immortality. Even upon death he saw himself as being with God and conscious.

This is also found in Ecclesiastes 12:7; Luke 23:43; John 14:3; II Corinthians 5:1-8; and Philippians 1:22-24.

7. *Joining the Dead*

The seventh evidence for the Doctrine of Immortality is that David expected to be able to join his dead son after David's own death. This is a statement that he made in II Samuel 12:23:

> *But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he will not return to me.*

Notice the way that David put it: he expected to go to the place where his deceased son was, and expected to see him at that time after death. So David expected to be able to join his dead son in a conscious way after his own death, and he expressed it in this passage. This, too, clearly shows that the Bible teaches immortality, and that immortality was a blessed hope of the Old Testament saints.

8. *The Consciousness of the Souls of* Sheol

The eighth evidence of the teaching for the Doctrine of Immortality is that the souls of *Sheol* are seen in continuous consciousness. A good example of this in the Old Testament is Isaiah 14:9-11:

> *Sheol from beneath is moved for you to meet you at your coming; it stirs up the dead for you, even all the chief ones of the earth; it has raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations. All they shall answer and say unto you, Are you also become weak as we? are you become like unto us? Your pomp is brought down to Sheol, and the noise of your viols: the worm is spread under you, and worms cover you.*

In this passage the soul of the king of Babylon enters into the Hell section of *Sheol* itself, and all the souls that preceded him in Hell suddenly rise in astonishment as they see this one also entering the domains of Hell. They

are able to ask him questions and carry on a conversation. So it should not be missed that these dead ones are portrayed as being conscious.

In the New Testament, this is taught by Luke 16:19-31 in the story of the rich man and Lazarus. Though it is frequently called "The Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus," this is incorrect. Luke does not say that it is a parable, nor does Jesus begin that story as He often did by saying, "Learn a parable." Parables do not have names like "Lazarus" and "Abraham." This is a true story. Notice that after the rich man died and after Lazarus died, both of these men were conscious. Furthermore, someone else is mentioned who had also died centuries earlier: Abraham. Abraham and the rich man can carry on a conversation; they are clearly conscious although physically they have died. The story of the rich man and Lazarus, then, is another evidence for the teaching of the Doctrine of Immortality.

9. *Eternity in the Heart*

The ninth evidence for the Doctrine of Immortality is the statement made by Ecclesiastes 3:11: *he has set eternity in their heart*. The word *heart* is used frequently in Scripture as one of the facets of the immaterial part of man. Contained within the immaterial part of man, according to Ecclesiastes 3:11, is the fact that eternity has been placed in it. So contained within the immaterial part of man is the element of immortality.

10. *Samuel's Appearance to Saul*

The tenth evidence for the Doctrine of Immortality is the fact that Samuel was seen as being conscious after his own death. I Samuel 28:8-19 is the account of Saul's going to a witch to see if she could bring up the soul of Samuel from *Sheol*. Now, witches do not have that kind of power, and neither did this one. What happens in these situations is that a demon is impersonating the dead. But in this account, the real Samuel actually comes up to the surprise of the witch, which shows that she had nothing to do with it. God intervened in this instance and allowed the soul of Samuel to be brought up. Samuel was not resurrected from the dead at that point; it was simply the spirit of Samuel, his immaterial part, that was brought up from *Sheol*. He was able to carry on this conversation with Saul, letting

Saul know that his doom had come and he will die in the battle with the Philistines. But the point is that Samuel was fully conscious even after his own physical death, and that, too, shows immortality.

11. God is a God of the Living

The eleventh evidence for the doctrine of Immortality is what Jesus said about God in Matthew 22:29-32: *God is not the God of the dead, but of the living* (v. 32). Although those particular living ones he mentioned, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, were physically dead, yet God is a God of the living. The point being made is that God has a continuous conscious, living, relationship with the Patriarchs, which is one reason why He cannot leave their bodies dead. But while the resurrection of the body was still future, God already had a relationship with them because their immaterial part was very conscious.

12. Through Death is Life

The twelfth evidence for the Doctrine of Immortality is the statement made in John 11:25-26 concerning the dead Lazarus: *though he die, yet shall he live* (v. 25). Notice it does not say, "though he died, he will live." If it did, it would merely mean that eventually the dead one would be resurrected. However, John used the present tense: "though he is now dead, he is also now living;" though one dies, he still lives. He is certainly dead physically, but the immaterial part of man has a continuous, living consciousness and, therefore, Jesus can say of a dead saint, though he is dead, he is living.

13. The Promise of Future Glory

The thirteenth evidence for the teaching of the Doctrine of Immortality is the fact of the promise of future glory. The guarantee of future glory for the believer is found in Romans 8:18, and the fact that the believer is destined to be glorified also implies immortality, because the very act of glorification implies continuous eternal existence. Romans 8:18 states:

For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us-ward.

14. The Promise of a Future Life

The fourteenth evidence for the Doctrine of Immortality is found in I Corinthians 15:19, which states that a lack of future life would make the believer *most pitiable*. The lack of a future life for the believer makes him *most pitiable* because believers have committed their lives to God based upon His promise of immortality. Believers have a very narrow lifestyle and discipline themselves to live in accordance with His rules and His regulations, so if there is no life after death, if there is no immortality, then all this was for nothing, and their faith was in vain. This indeed would make the believer *most pitiable*. So immortality must be true because of the kind of lifestyle we are expected to have.

15. The Soul is Renewed

The fifteenth evidence for the Doctrine of Immortality is the statement made in II Corinthians 4:16-18 that while the body decays, the soul *is renewed day by day*. Though the body eventually decays in death, yet the soul *is renewed day by day*. The only reason for the soul to be renewed daily is because of its immortality.

16. Immortality Through the Gospel

The sixteenth evidence for the Doctrine of Immortality is in II Timothy 1:10, where Paul states that both *life and immortality* are brought to light through the gospel. The very fact that he connects immortality with the gospel shows that one of the reasons for the gospel is the salvation of the soul for its continued existence.

17. Future Rewards and Punishments

The last evidence for the Doctrine of Immortality is the fact that future

reward and future punishment imply immortality; these things would have no meaning after death unless immortality were true. This fact is found in Matthew 11:20-24; 13:49-50; 25:34, 41, 46; Romans 2:5-11; and II Timothy 4:7-8.

C. *The Benefits of the Doctrine of Immortality*

The third major category is to discuss briefly the benefits of the Doctrine of Immortality. There are three such benefits of the Doctrine of Immortality.

1. Our Hope of Future Joy

Immortality provides us the hope of future joy, according to Philippians 1:23-24:

> *But I am in a strait betwixt the two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ; for it is very far better: yet to abide in the flesh is more needful for your sake.*

In this passage Paul faced the possibility of physical death, but that gave him the hope of future joy, knowing that upon separation from the body, he is going to be in a conscious, continuous fellowship with the Lord.

2. Our Temporary Residence in this Life

The second benefit of the Doctrine of Immortality is the awareness that believers are only temporary residents in this life, according to Philippians 3:20:

> *For our citizenship is in heaven; whence also we wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: . . .*

The believer's *citizenship is in heaven*. The fact that immortality is true produces the awareness that believers are temporary residents in this life, because now their *citizenship is in heaven*. What that means practically is that all trials

and tribulations in this life do not need to be taken to the point of defeat or to the point of despair or to the point of depression. Rather, believers can look upon them and say, "This, too, will pass, I am only a temporary resident on this earth, in this land. This, too, will pass. My *citizenship is in heaven*. I will some day know the full joy of the Lord." This is the second benefit of the Doctrine of Immortality: the awareness of temporary residence in this life and, after death, the destiny of eternal, continuous consciousness in Heaven itself.

3. Our Motivation for Righteous Living

The third benefit of the Doctrine of Immortality is that immortality provides us our motivation for living righteous, Spirit-filled, sanctified lives. A person who does not have the real, living hope of immortality struggles to make the best he can out of life right here. The unsaved struggle and strive, constantly reaching out for those higher standards of living because they do not have the hope of eternal immortality in their hearts. They do not believe in immortality, and because they do not believe in immortality, they try to get the best they can in this life. They constantly struggle with materialism.

D. False Views

The fourth major category of this study of immortality is to discuss some common false views or common misconceptions concerning immortality. There are four major wrong views.

1. Cessation of Existence

The first false view is that of cessation of existence. This is the doctrine of pure mortalism. This life is all there is and, once this body dies, there is total cessation of existence. Not only is there a cessation of consciousness, but of existence as well. This is the view of atheism. Of course, those who hold to this false view totally reject biblical revelation, for this view requires the rejection of the clear biblical teachings concerning immortality. Obviously, this is not a view that believers in the Bible should hold.

2. Transmigration of the Soul or Reincarnation

There is a second false view, also held among unbelievers, and that is the teaching of the transmigration of the soul. This is also known as

reincarnation: when the body dies, the soul continues to exist, but does not go either to Heaven or Hell; it simply transmigrates and enters into a new, living body, be it another person or even an animal. This teaching concerning the transmigration of the soul or reincarnation has no biblical evidence.

Some try to use a statement made in Luke 1:17, where it states that John the Baptist came *in the spirit and power of Elijah* the Prophet. The argument says that since Elijah was *in* John the Baptist, it teaches reincarnation, for the soul or spirit of Elijah the Prophet actually entered the body of John the Baptist when he was either conceived or born. However, that is not what Luke 1:17 is teaching. When Luke 1:17 states that John came *in the spirit and power of Elijah*, it means that both these men had the power and the presence of the same Holy Spirit. The *spirit* in this verse is the Holy Spirit, not the human spirit. The power is the power of the Holy Spirit. So both men had the power and the presence of the Holy Spirit. This does not, in any way, teach reincarnation.

Furthermore, the principle of Hebrews 9:27 militates against reincarnation: *inasmuch as it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this comes judgment*. This verse goes against the concept of transmigration of the soul. While it is true that some men have died twice in that they have been resurrected and therefore died again, that is not reincarnation; it is the same human spirit that indwelt the person before and which indwells him again. The same immaterial part of man is joined with the same material part of man in resurrection. So there is no transmigration of the soul, there is no reincarnation; it is the same spirit-soul that is brought back into that same body.

3. Conditional Immortality

The first two false views are views held by unbelievers, but the third and fourth false views are held by many believers and also held by many among the cults. The third wrong view is called "conditional immortality." Conditional immortality means the soul is not inherently immortal; immortality is not part of the make-up of the soul. Rather, immortality is a gift for the saved only. So at death, the unbeliever simply becomes nonexistent, and only the believer continues to exist. This view is primarily taught by certain cults, but unfortunately, this view is also held by many who are believers.

The various arguments used in favor of conditional immortality, as well as the arguments against it, are the same arguments for and against the fourth position, so these will be dealt with in conjunction with the fourth wrong view.

4. Annihilationism

The most common false view, especially because of the cults, is the fourth view: the doctrine of annihilationism. What annihilationism says is this: the unsaved soul is annihilated after a temporary period of punishment. These people do believe that the unsaved soul goes to Hell, but not for eternity, only temporarily. Eventually the unsaved soul is annihilated after suffering a duration of punishment.

a. The Arguments in Support of Annihilationism

What are the supporting arguments that they like to use? It is possible to subdivide the support of annihilationism in two categories: theological arguments and scriptural arguments.

(1) The Theological Arguments

Basically, they use eight theological arguments.

The first one is based upon the love of God; they claim that it is against the love of God for eternal punishment to be true.

The second theological argument is based upon the justice of God; there is no justice in eternal punishment.

The third theological argument is that the soul does not inherit immortality; it must be gained. This is based upon the reading of Genesis 2:7, where it states: *man became a living soul*, and also Genesis 3:19, where it states: *dust you are, and unto dust you shall return*. By combining these two passages, they say that the soul does not possess inherent immortality, but it must be gained.

The fourth theological argument is that God has failed if evil is not liquidated in its existence. Since the continued existence of the unsaved means the continued existence of evil, God would have failed if evil is not liquidated in its existence and, therefore, it will be liquidated by annihilation.

The fifth theological argument they like to use is to ask the question:

"Where is the justice for dead infants and the ignorant heathen in eternal punishment?" It is unjust for those who died in infancy and those who died in ignorance to be in eternal punishment.

The sixth theological argument is that punishment is only beneficial or useful when it is used for reformation. In eternal punishment there is no reformation; therefore, there is no need for it.

The seventh theological argument is: "Why should God and the universe be burdened with the continuous existence of those who have scorned a useful life?" They see the continuous, eternal existence of the unbeliever as being a burden to God and the universe; therefore, it should be done away with.

The eighth theological argument is that the righteous ones could not enjoy bliss knowing that others are continually in Hell. Those in Heaven will simply not be able to enjoy it if they know that there are others suffering continuously in Hell.

(2) The Scriptural Arguments

They also use scriptural arguments, and all together there are sixteen scriptural arguments they like to use. They depend heavily upon the use of the word *destruction*.

First: Matthew 10:28, which refers to God's ability *to destroy both soul and body in hell.*

Second: Matthew 7:13, where it speaks about how *broad is the way. . . to destruction.* This *destruction* is interpreted as "ceasing to exist."

Third: Romans 9:22, where it speaks about the unbeliever being *fitted* for *destruction*.

Fourth: II Peter 2:1, where *false prophets* and *false teachers* bring to *themselves swift destruction*.

Fifth: Philippians 3:19, which speaks about the unbeliever *whose end is perdition*. The Greek word there, they point out, is the same as the other ones that were translated "to destroy."

Sixth: II Peter 2:12, where it speaks about those unbelievers *to be taken and destroyed.*

Seventh: I Thessalonians 5:3, where it speaks about the unbeliever's finally facing *sudden destruction*.

Eighth: II Thessalonians 2:8, which speaks about the *lawless one* destined to be destroyed.

Ninth: Ezekiel 18:4, 20, which does speak of the death of the soul.

Tenth: Psalm 146:4, which states that a man's *thoughts perish* when he dies. If his *thoughts perish*, this means the immaterial part of man ceases to exist.

Eleventh: Ecclesiastes 9:5, where it mentions that *the dead know not any thing*.

Twelfth: by combining Genesis 2:7 with 3:19 they claim that man is a soul that turns to dust upon physical death.

Thirteenth: they mention that the terms *Hades* and *Sheol* actually mean "oblivion and death"; therefore it means "a cessation of existence."

Fourteenth: Colossians 1:20, where it states that "all things are reconciled." If there is a continuous existence of the unsaved in eternal punishment, it would mean that "all things" were not reconciled; but if *all things* are reconciled, it means there is an elimination and annihilation of the unbelieving element.

Fifteenth: II Timothy 1:10, which speaks about death eventually being *abolished*.

Sixteenth: I Corinthians 15:25-26, which speaks about death being destroyed.

b. The Arguments Against Annihilationism

These arguments will be dealt with one by one in the same order as presented above.

(1) The Theological Arguments

First: there was the argument concerning the love of God: that the love of God would not allow for eternal punishment. However, if it is inconsistent with God's love to have man eternally punished, it would also be against God's love to have man suffer Hell temporarily or to allow man's misery at the present time. One cannot use God's love as an argument against eternal punishment and not against temporary punishment. If the love of God were inconsistent with one, it would also be inconsistent with the other. Yet they do believe in temporary punishment.

Second: concerning God's justice, it is a matter of human opinion

that the justice of God would not allow for eternal punishment. The Bible actually teaches otherwise: that the very justice of God requires eternal punishment for those who have rejected the eternal life He has provided for them.

Third: concerning their claim that the soul does not possess inherent immortality according to Luke 16:19-31, notice who was in torment. The rich man is in torment and, while his body did turn to dust, his soul did not.

Fourth: concerning the argument that God has failed if evil is not liquidated, this is an assumption that they make which they do not prove. The Bible actually teaches otherwise. If the plan of God had included the annihilation of the unsaved, then God's plan fails if it does not follow through. But if God's plan includes eternal punishment, then God has not failed.

Fifth: concerning justice for the dead infants and the ignorant heathen, here, they make an assumption that infants go to Hell. The Bible does not specify one way or the other. Furthermore, this is a human concept of divine justice that goes contrary to the biblical concept.

Sixth: the argument was that punishment is only beneficial when it is used for reformation. Since the unsaved dead are not going to be reformed during eternity, therefore, they will be annihilated. But again, this is an assumption that they make concerning the legitimate use of punishment. It is not true that punishment is only beneficial for reformation. Sometimes punishment is a punishment in and of itself. So the assumption regarding the legitimate use of punishment is not necessarily true. Eternal punishment is not for the purpose of reformation, but for the purpose of punishment itself.

Seventh: why should God and the universe be burdened with the continued existence of those who have scorned a useful life? The answer is simply because God so willed it. Furthermore, it will not be a burden. Believers are going to be in a perfect, holy state and will not sustain the same relationship to the unsaved as they do now. At that time, they will not feel this burden. They will have the mind of God and will see it from His perspective, not their own.

Eighth: the righteous could enjoy bliss only if they know that others are not suffering eternally; the righteous could not enjoy bliss knowing that others are continually suffering in Hell. But the answer here is that the righteous will enjoy the bliss of God's presence and will not be en-

cumbered with the present perspective regarding what is inappropriate to Heaven's bliss.

(2) The Scriptural Arguments

One of their major arguments was based upon the use of a Greek word *apollumi*, which is translated by the King James Version as "destroy." They refer to passages like Matthew 10:6, 28; 15:24; 16:25; and other passages.

Their first scriptural argument was based on Matthew 10:28. The word *apollumi* does not mean "utter destruction to the point of ceasing to exist." This is obvious from its usage elsewhere. It simply means "to be in a lost state." It is not used of the utter annihilation of both body and soul, because the same Greek word that is translated "destroyed" is used even of those who are still living. For example, this word is used of the living ones in Matthew 10:6, where it is translated as *lost*; in Matthew 15:24, the *lost*; in Matthew 16:25, whoever *loses*; and in Luke 19:10, *that which was lost*. So the word *apollumi* does not mean "destruction" in the sense of "cessation of existence;" it simply means "to be in a lost condition." Those eternally in Hell will not be destroyed to the point of ceasing to exist; more correctly, rather, those eternally in the Lake of Fire are simply those who are in an eternal lost state.

The second, third, fourth, and fifth scriptural arguments were based on Matthew 7:13; Romans 9:22; II Peter 2:1; and Philippians 3:19, all of which use the term "to be destroyed." But the answer here is that the statements made in these passages use the Greek word *apuleia,* which does not mean "a cessation of existence." It is used elsewhere where it simply means "to be in a wasted condition." It does not teach annihilationism; it is not the annihilation of the material, but the lostness or uselessness of that which is being described. The same word is used in Matthew 26:8 and Mark 14:4, where it is translated as merely being in "a state of wastedness." Again, these verses do not mean "annihilation of the material," but simply emphasize its lostness or its uselessness. So, these verses do not teach annihilationism.

Sixth, they use II Peter 2:12 which, in the King James Version, reads: *to be taken and destroyed*. But the Greek word here is *phthora*, which means "corruption." The victims are merely seen as being in a state of corruption;

they are to be totally corrupted as they will be in the Lake of Fire. They will be corrupted, but they do not cease to exist.

Seventh, concerning I Thessalonians 5:3, which speaks of the unbeliever as facing *sudden destruction*, the Greek word used here is *holephros*, which means "destruction." It does not mean "destruction in the sense of annihilation;" rather, it is dealing with the physical destruction of the Great Tribulation. That verse is in the context of the Great Tribulation and speaks of the destruction of the physical world, not the destruction of the soul of the unbeliever.

Eighth, concerning II Thessalonians 2:8, which speaks of the *lawless one* as being destroyed, the Greek word here is *katargeo*, which means only "to render inoperative." It does not mean "to annihilate," but "to render inoperative." In this passage, it is used of the Antichrist, and it simply states that the Antichrist's power and authority will eventually be rendered inoperative. In fact, the meaning of this is spelled out in other passages. For example, Revelation 19:20 declares that the Antichrist will be *cast alive into the lake of fire*, and with that action, he will then be rendered inoperative, as prophesied in II Thessalonians 2:8. Furthermore, Revelation 20:10 points out that even after one thousand years in the Lake of Fire, the Antichrist is still alive in there. So II Thessalonians 2:8 does not mean "to be destroyed" in the sense of "ceasing to exist," but "to be destroyed" in the sense of "being rendered inoperative."

Ninth, concerning Ezekiel 18:4 and 20, which speaks about the soul as dying, the word "death" never means annihilation, as is obvious from Ephesians 2:1-3 and 9. Death is simply "a separation." In this case, the dead soul is separated from God. A soul that is dead is a soul that has no spiritual life; the unbeliever has a spiritually dead soul, but it is not nonexistent. The soul that separates from the body in an unbelieving state eventually goes into a second death, but second death is not annihilation; it simply means eternal separation from God.

Tenth, another Old Testament passage that they use is Psalm 146:4, where it states that a man's *thoughts perish* when he dies. But actually, verses 3 and 4 taken together and in context simply teach that a man's devices, man's plans, and man's thoughts cannot be carried out on the earth after physical death. He has lost any opportunity to see his plans carried out; it does not teach a cessation of existence.

Eleventh, Ecclesiastes 9:5 does speak about *the dead* not knowing *any*

thing, but the context of Ecclesiastes 9:5 is simply drawing the conclusion of human philosophy. Indeed, from the standpoint of human philosophy, *under the sun*, that is the way it looks (v. 6). But again, Ecclesiastes 9:5 simply spells out what human philosophy feels *under the sun*. It is not a divine decree; it is not a positive affirmation of the Word of God.

Twelfth, they combine Genesis 2:7 with 3:19, pointing out that man is a soul that turns to dust. However, according to these passages, it is the body, not the soul, that turns to dust. It was Adam's body that was created from the dust, not Adam's soul. The soul came from the breath of God, not from the dust; therefore, it is the body, not the soul, that returns to dust. Luke 16:19-31 spells out what actually happens to the soul at death.

Thirteenth, as to their claim that *Sheol* and *Hades* mean "oblivion and death," but that is not the meaning of those words, as anyone who knows Hebrew and Greek can testify. Again, Luke 16:19-31 shows that the rich man is very conscious where he is in *Sheol*, so the term cannot possibly mean "oblivion."

Fourteenth, they also use Colossians 1:20, which speaks about "all things being reconciled." But in that context, the "all things" does not mean "all things without exception;" rather, it means "all things without distinction." All kinds of things will be reconciled, but not all things as such.

Fifteenth and sixteenth, they use II Timothy 1:10 and I Corinthians 15:25-26, which speak of death as being *abolished*. However, these two verses deal only with the effects of natural death upon the body. It is the first death—physical death—that is *abolished*; the second death—eternal, spiritual death—is not. It is the abolishment of the first death that makes resurrection possible, but the second death is going to be eternal.

c. Additional Arguments Against Annihilationism

In conclusion, there are eleven additional arguments to show that the Bible does not teach annihilationism. It does teach the immortality of the soul of both the believer and the unbeliever.

(1) Daniel's Prophecy

The first evidence is found in Daniel 12:2, which speaks of a coming resurrection. Daniel prophesied that some are going to be resurrected *to everlasting life,* and others resurrected to *everlasting contempt*. It is inconsistent exegesis or inconsistent interpretation to claim that when it speaks of *everlasting life* for the believer, it means immortality, but when it speaks about *everlasting contempt* for the unbeliever, then it is not immortality nor eternal. The same word is used in relation to the believer and the unbeliever in the same verse. One must never interpret the Bible in such a way that the same word in the same verse means two totally different things unless it can be proved by some indication, and there is no such indication in this verse.

(2) Eternal Life and Eternal Contempt

Second, Matthew 25:46 points out that some go into *eternal life* while others go into *eternal punishment*. Again, if the believer receives *eternal life* and that means immortality for them, since Jesus used the same expression for the unbeliever when he speaks of *eternal punishment*, it must also mean immortality for them as well. Like Daniel 12:2, Matthew 25:46 uses the same terminology for the unbeliever as for the believer, and therefore it must mean the same thing. Again, it is simply inconsistent exegesis to take the same word and make it mean two opposite things in the same verse.

(3) Fire of Torment

The third additional argument is based on Mark 9:47-48, which speaks of *the fire* of torment in which the unbeliever suffers: *the fire is not quenched*. That, too, teaches against annihilationism.

(4) Fallen Angels

The fourth additional argument is found in Hebrews 2:16, which points out that God did not provide salvation for fallen angels. How is that relevant? Part of the teaching of the annihilationists is based upon the theological argument and the scriptural argument that the Bible promises that "all things are to be reconciled to God" (Col. 1:20). But the fact is that the "all things" here does not mean "all things without exception;" rather,

all kinds of things will be reconciled, but not every one of every kind. According to Hebrews 2:16, salvation was not provided for fallen angels, so fallen angels will never be reconciled to God, and yet they continue to be eternal beings. The fact that there is no reconciliation for fallen angels shows that the Colossians passage cannot be used to teach that all things without exception are going to be reconciled by means of the annihilation of the evil ones. It simply cannot mean that.

(5) Eternal Judgment

The fifth argument is found in Hebrews 6:2, which speaks of *eternal judgment*. Again, the word *eternal* here is the same one used in reference to eternal life. If for the believer the word *eternal* means "immortality," that same word used in reference to an unbeliever must also mean "immortality."

(6) Eternal Punishment

The sixth argument is found in Jude 7, which speaks of the *punishment of eternal fire*. The *fire* itself is said to be *eternal*, and the *punishment* itself is said to be *eternal*. It is not just the *fire* that is *eternal*, but the *punishment* in the *fire* that is *eternal*. If it were only temporary, as annihilationism teaches, then it is obviously not *eternal*.

(7) The Eternal Lake of Fire

The seventh argument is based upon Revelation 14:11, where it speaks of some being tormented in the Lake of Fire *for ever and ever*. "What does it mean to be tormented *for ever and ever*?" Annihilationism claims that the term *for ever and ever* does not mean "eternity," it just means "a very long time." After a very long time, they will be annihilated. The problem with that explanation of Revelation 14:11 is that the very same expression is used of God in Revelation 15:7, where God is said to live *for ever and ever*. Is God eternal or is He only temporary? Even the annihilationists believe God is eternal. Since the same expression is used of God as is used for the tormenting of the unbeliever, obviously, it cannot be temporary, but must also be eternal.

(8) The Beast and the False Prophet

The eighth argument is to compare Revelation 19:20 with Revelation 20:10, which shows that the Beast and the False Prophet are still in the Lake of Fire after one thousand years. Even one thousand years in the Lake of Fire is not enough for them to have been annihilated. One would assume that they would no longer have been alive if annihilationism were true.

(9) The Greek Word Aionos

The ninth argument is based upon the Greek word *aionos*, which is the usual term that is translated "eternal." Those who teach annihilationism try to prove that the word *aionos* does not mean "eternal," but simply means "for an age." However, again it should be pointed out that the Greek word *aionos* is used of both believers and unbelievers as in Matthew 25:46. Therefore, one cannot make *aionos* mean "eternality" or "immortality" for the believer, and yet make it mean only "temporariness" for the unbeliever. If it is eternal for the believer—and annihilationists do make it mean "eternal" for the believer—they cannot then turn around and say that for the unbeliever it is only a temporary duration. One cannot take the same word and make it mean two different things. This is interpreting Scripture by one's theology rather than deducing theology from the Scriptures, which is the proper way of developing theology.

(10) God is Eternal

The tenth argument against annihilationism is that the very same word, *aionos*, which the annihilationists said does not mean "eternal" in some cases, is also a word used of God. It emphasizes God's eternalness and is used in Revelation 4:9; 10:6; 15:7; and Hebrews 9:14. Again, is God temporary or is He eternal? Even they believe that God is an eternal being. Therefore, they cannot make the same word have the opposite meaning when it refers to the unbeliever.

(11) For Ever and Ever

The eleventh and final argument against annihilationism is also based on the expression "for ever and ever." This expression is used a total of thirteen times in the Book of Revelation. Nine of those thirteen times, it is

used of God, and they all agree that when it is used of God, it emphasizes eternality and immortality. Once it is used of the saints in Heaven, and they certainly believe that in the case of the saints in Heaven, these are the eternal, immortal beings. Then it is used once of Satan in the Lake of Fire and twice of the unbeliever in the Lake of Fire. But in these last three cases, they want to make it only temporary. If ten times they agree that it means "eternal," they cannot then turn around and make these last three times mean something temporary. If it is true that it teaches the immortality of God and the saints in Heaven, it must also teach the immortality of Satan and the unbelievers in the Lake of Fire. Again, we must deduce our theology from the Scriptures, not interpret Scriptures by our preconceived theology or our emotional preferences.

APPENDIX VIII

The Intermediate State Between Death and Resurrection

A. The Meaning

What is meant by the intermediate state? The basic meaning of the intermediate state is the state of existence between death and resurrection.

There are three different states in the life of man. Whether one is a believer or an unbeliever, he will experience three different states, but not the same destiny. The first state of man is from birth to death; the second state of man is from death to resurrection; and the third state of man is from resurrection to eternity.

The intermediate state is concerned with that second state of man: from death to resurrection.

B. The State of the Believer

As far as the believers are concerned, the souls of the believers at their deaths are made perfect in holiness and they immediately pass into glory; their bodies, still united to the Messiah, rest in their graves until the resurrection. That is basically what the believer experiences upon death and in the intermediate state between death and resurrection. At the point of death, the immaterial part of the believer is made perfect in holiness and passes immediately into glory, into God's presence in Heaven. The bodies are buried in the ground somewhere, but these bodies are still united to the Messiah, so they are merely resting in death in their graves until the resurrection. As far as the immaterial part of the believer is concerned, upon death his spirit or soul has perfect freedom from sin and suffering, and has great exultation and blessedness.

The Bible does give us some descriptions of what the intermediate state is like between death and resurrection for the soul of the believer.

1. A State Far Better

One passage is Philippians 1:23-24:

> *But I am in a strait betwixt the two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ; for it is very far better: yet to abide in the flesh is more needful for your sake.*

In this passage, one is clearly told that the state of the soul after death is *very far better* than its condition while it is *in the flesh*. A change for the better takes place immediately after death. Upon death, while the material part of man—the body—stays behind, the immaterial part of man—all that pertains to the spirit and soul—enters into God's presence and is in an exulted position, a *far better* position than is found while the immaterial part of man was residing in his body.

2. A State of Rest

The intermediate state is also described as a state of rest, according to two passages. Those who have already died now exist in a state of rest.

The first passage is Revelation 6:9-11:

> *And when he opened the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of them that had been slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a great voice, saying, How long, O Master, the holy and true, do you not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And there was given them to each one a white robe; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little time, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, who should be killed even as they were, should have fulfilled their course.*

A second passage emphasizing their state of rest is Revelation 14:13:

> *And I heard the voice from heaven saying, Write, Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; for their works follow with them.*

3. A State of Consciousness

There is another passage which details the intermediate state and what life is like for the believer who has died, and that is Revelation 7:16-17:

> *They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun strike upon them, nor any heat: for the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them unto fountains of waters of life: and God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes.*

These two verses spell out five things about what life is like in the intermediate state for the believer. All of these are negative things that lead to positives: first, no hunger; second, no thirst; third, no sunstroke; fourth, no heat; and fifth, no tears. The believer at this time is in a state of complete rest. He has no wants; he has no physical infirmities whatsoever. That is what life is like when a believer dies.

One thing that should be made clear is that all the Scriptures which describe the soul of the believer upon death show him to be in a state of consciousness; upon death, the believer's immaterial part is totally conscious.

C. The State of the Unbeliever

The intermediate state of the unbeliever is quite the reverse of what the state of the believer is like. There are three main passages that describe the unbeliever in the intermediate state.

1. A State of Torment

The first passage is Luke 16:19-31, which is the story of the rich man and Lazarus. Sometimes this is called "The Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus," but that is a manmade title; the Bible does not say that it is a parable. Parables do not have personal names like "Lazarus and Abraham." On the contrary, this is a story that Jesus tells, and it is treated as a true story, not merely as a parable.

In the story of the rich man and Lazarus, not only is Lazarus in a state of rest and full consciousness, the rich man is also in a state of consciousness, but he is in torment. So the state of the unbeliever's soul between

death and resurrection is a state of torment.

2. A State of Confinement

A second passage is found in I Peter 3:19, which describes these unsaved spirits as being in prison:

> *In which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison,...*

The picture is that, since they are in Hell, they are imprisoned; they are in a state of confinement.

3. A State of Punishment

The third passage is II Peter 2:9, which describes the unbeliever's soul as being under punishment until the day of judgment:

> *The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment unto the day of judgment;...*

The picture here is that the unbeliever is suffering in Hell; he is confined in Hell. He is under punishment until the day of the Great White Throne Judgment, when he will be resurrected; then he will suffer something even worse than death and Hell, and that is the Lake of Fire.

4. Deductions

From these three passages, three things can be deduced about the intermediate state of the unbeliever: first, he is in a state of torment; second, he is in a state of confinement; and third, he is in this state of torment and confinement until the Great White Throne Judgment.

In all the passages that describe unbelievers in the intermediate state, they are also always shown to be in a state of consciousness. The rich man in Hell was conscious; he was able to carry on a conversation; he was able to feel things emotionally, feel things psychologically, and feel things physically. Unbelievers are always viewed as being in a state of consciousness.

So the immaterial part of the believer and the unbeliever are in a state of consciousness after death even though they are in two different places. While the believer is in Heaven in the presence of God, the unbeliever is in

Hell being tormented, but the torment will become greater after the second resurrection—the resurrection of unbelievers only.

D. The Intermediate Body

The question here is: What is the intermediate body, if any, that the believer has between death and resurrection?

1. The Issue

The issue is this: upon death, does the soul remain disembodied until the resurrection or is an intermediate body given to the soul until the resurrection?

2. The Key Passage—II Corinthians 5:1-10

> *For we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens. For verily in this we groan, longing to be clothed upon with our habitation which is from heaven: if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For indeed we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed, but that we would be clothed upon, that what is mortal may be swallowed up of life. Now he that wrought us for this very thing is God, who gave unto us the earnest of the Spirit. Being therefore always of good courage, and knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord (for we walk by faith, not by sight); we are of good courage, I say, and are willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be at home with the Lord. Wherefore also we make it our aim, whether at home or absent, to be well-pleasing unto him. For we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether it be good or bad.*

This is the key passage concerning the existence or non-existence of the

intermediate body. This passage will be discussed in three parts: analysis, deduction, and conclusion.

a. Analysis

Verse one states that if the believer's *house* of his *tabernacle be dissolved*, if his body is dissolved by death, he has another *building from God,* a *house* that is *not made with hands*, that is, *eternal*, and is *in the heavens*.

In verse two, he points out that in our present body *we groan*. While believers are in this present body, they are *longing to be clothed upon with our habitation which is from heaven.*

Verse three states: *if so be that being clothed, we shall not be found naked*. The implication here is that the believer is naked without his body during the intermediate state.

In verse four he states:... *indeed we that are in this tabernacle do groan,...*

The believer is burdened in this body because of the body's weaknesses. The believer is not longing to be *unclothed*, but rather what the believer is longing for is to *be clothed upon*. What the believer is longing to be clothed with is spelled out in the next line:... *what is mortal may be swallowed up of life*. What Paul wrote here is a summary of his statements made in I Corinthians 15:50-58, where he emphasized that at some point—at the resurrection—mortality must put on immortality. So, what the believer wants to be clothed with is immortality and once the believer puts on immortality, *what is mortal* will indeed be *swallowed up*.

Then in verse five, he points out who the Maker of all this is: *Now he that wrought us for this very thing is God,...* God is the One Who is working in the believers to give them a body that eventually will be characterized by immortality. Temporarily, He has given the believer *the earnest of the Spirit*. The Spirit is an "earnest payment," a down payment or a reservation payment. The fact that the believer has the indwelling Holy Spirit is the guarantee that a day will come when the believer's mortal body shall put on immortality.

Verse six states that this reason, knowing that the believer has the Holy Spirit as the evidence of a down payment, should give them *good courage*. As long as the believer is living in his mortal body, this automatically means that the believer is *absent from the Lord*.

The believer is not absent spiritually, of course, but he is absent physically, because verse seven states that in this life, the believer walks *by faith*, *not by sight*. Only when the believer goes into Heaven will he have *sight* as well as *faith*.

In verse eight, he tells the believer again to be of *good courage*. While one must recognize that as long as one is in this mortal body he is absent from the Lord, one should always be willing to give up one's life, one's mortal body, *to be at home with the Lord*. Here is a clear verse which says purely and simply that upon absence from the body, upon death, the believer is in God's presence.

In verse nine, he goes on to state: *Wherefore also we make it our aim, whether at home or absent, to be well-pleasing to him*. Knowing what the believer is now, knowing what the future holds, and knowing that the believer has the earnest of the Holy Spirit, the believer's life should be conducted consistently with the aim of being *well-pleasing* to the Lord.

In verse ten, he concludes this discussion by pointing out that once *all* believers get to Heaven with their immortal bodies they will *all* have to be *made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ*, described in I Corinthians 3:10-15. The purpose for this judgment is the receiving of rewards or not receiving rewards *that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether it be good or bad*. While the believer's works have nothing to do with his salvation—he is saved by grace apart from works—nevertheless works do determine the believer's rewards, and that, in turn, determines the believer's degree of authority in the Kingdom.

b. Deductions

From the above analysis, five deductions can be drawn.

First, the question here is this: Is he speaking of an intermediate body, or is he speaking of the resurrection body? Which body does this passage really speak about? Those who believe that there will be an intermediate body use this passage to prove it, but the evidence shows this to be the resurrection body.

Second, according to verse one, this body is described as being *eternal*, and the term "*eternal* body" cannot be applied to an intermediate body, which is temporary. Since he calls this body the *eternal* one, it is better

to see this as speaking of the resurrection body, not of some intermediate body.

Third, if this is an intermediate body, what would happen to this intermediate body at the resurrection? If the body of verse one is an intermediate body, and since it is called an *eternal* body, what would happen to it, since it could not disappear? What would happen to it in the resurrection? Again, it is better to see this passage as speaking of the resurrection body, not an intermediate body.

Fourth, verses 3-4 do imply that there will be a temporary period of nakedness for the soul until it is clothed with the resurrection body. The implication is that in the intermediate state, there is no intermediate body. The believer is unclothed; he is naked; he has no body until he receives his resurrection body.

Fifth, verse ten connects the body topic with the *judgment-seat of Christ*. The *judgment-seat of Christ*, by virtue of its timing, happens after the Rapture, which is when the resurrection occurs. So by virtue of its timing, it would appear to be dealing with the resurrection body, not some intermediate body.

c. Conclusions

The conclusions can be stated in two simple points. First, this passage does not teach the existence of an intermediate body. Second, the body it deals with is the resurrection body.

3. The Question

The question is this: Can a disembodied spirit function without some kind of a body? Some claim a disembodied spirit cannot function without some kind of a body. It is this presupposition that causes some people to believe and to teach the existence of an intermediate body. But does the Bible really teach that a disembodied spirit cannot function without some kind of a body?

There are two passages of Scripture that talk about things which exist in spirit form, but do not have a body. For example John 4:24 states: *God is a Spirit*, and the Spirit is likened to wind in John 3:8. Wind does not have any specific shape, form, or body, yet the wind is able to function. In John 4:24, *God is a Spirit*, yet He is able to function without a

body. Keep in mind that for all eternity past, the Second Person of the Trinity was also without a body; He took on a body only as of the Incarnation. Neither the Father nor the Spirit have a body; they are spirit beings and they are able to function apart from a body. Furthermore, Hebrews 1:14 states that the angels are spirit beings and they function without a body.

So a disembodied spirit can function without a body. One should not presuppose that it cannot and therefore conclude that there will have to be some kind of an intermediate body when the Bible nowhere speaks of the existence of such a body. Again, the teaching that such a body exists is based upon a presupposition that a disembodied spirit cannot function without some kind of a body. This is simply not true.

4. The Description

If what has been stated previously is true, what is the state of those who have died? Wherever the intermediate state of the dead is described, they are always seen as soul-spirits without bodies.

For example, in I Samuel 28:12-19, Samuel appears in the form of *a god*, meaning in the form of a spirit (v. 13). The spirit of Samuel came up from *Sheol*; Samuel came up in the form of a spirit. According to verse 14, when Samuel appeared as a spirit, he looked like he did when he had died. This shows that in the intermediate state, the soul-spirit has the same appearance as the body and yet there was no body there. The body of Samuel had died and it was still dead; Samuel was not resurrected from the dead at that point. Rather, it was his soul-spirit, the immaterial part of Samuel, that was brought up from *Sheol*. At that point, Samuel looked the same as when he had died because King Saul was able to recognize him. If Samuel had a totally different intermediate body, Saul would not have recognized him. Samuel appeared and looked the same as he did when he had died, showing that the soul-spirit has the same appearance as the body in the intermediate state, but there is no intermediate body in some glorified state.

A second passage is Luke 16:19-31, which is the story of the rich man and Lazarus in their deaths. In neither case, not with Lazarus, the rich man, not even when Abraham appears in that story, is there any mention of an intermediate body for Lazarus, for Abraham or for the rich man. Neither in Abraham's bosom nor in Hell was there any intermediate body. But in

that passage it is noted that they appear in death just as they appeared in life. So again, the immaterial part of man looks like the material part of man, but it is a soul-spirit; no intermediate body is mentioned.

Another evidence of the intermediate state of the dead being described as soul-spirits without bodies is in the story of the Transfiguration (Mat. 17:3; Mk. 9:4; Lk. 9:30-31). In the Transfiguration, there were two people who had come and gone before the time of Jesus: Moses and Elijah. The key person is Moses, because of the three men, he is the only one who had died. Jesus had not yet died. He was in His mortal body. In the case of Elijah, he was in his immortal body, because Elijah never died; he was raptured into Heaven, having undergone the same type of experience that living saints will undergo at the time of the Rapture of the Church. So Moses is the only one of those three who had died, yet there is nothing stated about Moses' having any kind of intermediate body. All that is stated in these three passages is that they appeared with the transfigured Messiah in glory, but it says nothing more. There is no hint in any way that there was an intermediate body of Moses. What one is told is that they do share in the *Shechinah* Glory, but it is not necessary to have an intermediate body to share in the *Shechinah* Glory.

One more passage that deals with the intermediate state where no bodies are mentioned is Revelation 6:9-11:

> *And when he opened the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of them that had been slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a great voice, saying, How long, O Master, the holy and true, do you not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And there was given them to each one a white robe; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little time, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, who should be killed even as they were, should have fulfilled their course.*

In this passage, John sees *souls* in Heaven and, while *souls* are mentioned, bodies are not mentioned.

From these examples it should be clear that whenever the intermediate state of the dead is described, they are always seen as soul-spirits without bodies.

5. The Conclusion

The conclusion is very simple: there is no intermediate body! The body that the believer has is the only body he will ever have. When the body that is now mortal dies, the soul-spirit goes into Heaven and is unclothed. It remains naked until the body is resurrected, and then the soul-spirit is clothed again. There is no intermediate body.

E. The False Teachings

There are two major false views or false teachings on the topic of the intermediate state. The first false view is that which is known as "the second probation," and the second major false view is known as "soul-sleeping."

1. The Second Probation Theory

The first false view is the doctrine of the second probation, which teaches that there will be a second chance to be saved after death.

a. The Two Forms of the Second Probation Theory

There are two different forms of the theory of second probation.

(1) Limited Second Probation

The first form is the limited second probation theory, which believes that the second probation is limited to those who die in infancy or die without hearing the gospel. Those who die as infants will have a second chance to be saved later, and those who die without hearing the gospel will have a second chance to be saved later, after death.

(2) Unlimited Second Probation

There is a second form of the second probation theory and that is the "unlimited second probation theory," which teaches that all will ultimately be saved. There are three types of the unlimited second probation.

(a) Universalism

One type is known as "universalism." Universalism teaches that all are eventually saved without the necessity of after-life repentance. A day will come when everybody is going to be saved in the second probationary period, even if they do not repent, do not believe, or do not exercise faith.

(b) Restorationism

A second form of the second probation theory is known as "restorationism." Restorationism teaches that all are saved because of a second chance to hear the gospel after death and a subsequent repentance after death. Both universalism and restorationism teach that all are going to be saved eventually; hence, it is unlimited. The difference between the two views is that universalism teaches that repentance will not be necessary for all to be saved; restorationism teaches repentance will be necessary for all to be saved, but they go on to point out that all will repent at some time after death.

(c) Universal Reconciliation

There is a third type of unlimited second probation known as "universal reconciliation." This view teaches that, after a long period of existence in the Lake of Fire, all are going to be reconciled back to God; all are going to be saved, including Satan.

The comparison: in comparing the three views of unlimited second probation, all three believe that everybody is going to be saved eventually. There are just some minor differences between them. Universalism teaches that all will be saved without repentance. Restorationism teaches all are going to be saved, but they are all going to repent first; repentance is necessary. Neither universalism nor restorationism teaches that there will be a period of temporary punishment. Universal reconciliation teaches that there will be a temporary period of punishment in the Lake of Fire, then all are going to be reconciled, including Satan.

b. Arguments in Favor of the Second Probation Theory

Those who believe in the second probation theory point to five passages

of Scripture: The first is Acts 3:21, which speaks of *the times of restoration of all things*. The second passage is I Corinthians 15:27-28, which states all things will be subjected to the Son. The third passage is Colossians 1:20, which states that God will *reconcile all things unto himself*, both in *the earth* and *in the heavens*. The fourth passage is Philippians 2:9-10, which teaches that *every knee* shall *bow*. The fifth passage is a combination of I Peter 3:19 with 4:6, which speaks about the gospel's being preached *to the dead*. Since it is preached *to the dead*, then it must mean a second probation.

These are the five arguments that are used to try to teach a second probation and they all use these same verses whether they hold to the limited or to one of the three forms of unlimited probation.

c. Arguments Against the Second Probation Theory

(1) The Scriptures Used

First, the Scriptures used in favor of it will be dealt with. The first passage is Acts 3:21, but in this verse the *all things* is limited to that which was spoken by the *prophets*, and that did not include any kind of universalism, limited or unlimited. The second passage is I Corinthians 15:27-28, but in this passage the *all things* being subject to the Son does not mean the salvation of all, but only that even the unsaved will be in subjection to Him. This is all that this passage is teaching. The third passage is Colossians 1:20, but in this verse, "reconciliation" does not mean all are saved. In fact, the very term "reconciliation" only means that all are savable. They still must believe, and if they die without believing, there is no further opportunity. The fourth passage is Philippians 2:9-10, but again this passage only shows the subjection of all to God; it does not mean the salvation of all. Even unbelievers will some day be in subjection to Him. Fifth, as to their comparison of I Peter 3:19 with 4:6, they are ignoring the fact that these are two different contexts. In 3:19 the Greek word for "preaching" is not the word that means "to preach the gospel" or "to evangelize." It is a different word, *keirusso*, that simply means "to proclaim." It is a proclamation not to save them, but a proclamation to condemn them. Furthermore, it was made to one group of spirits, those who were disobedient in Noah's day. In 4:6, the Greek wording means that the gospel had been preached to them while they

were still alive but had now passed away.

So none of these five passages that are used actually teach the doctrine of a second probation.

(2) The Fixed State of the Unbelieving Dead

The second argument against those who teach this doctrine is that the unbelieving dead are seen in a fixed state that cannot be altered. For example: Matthew 13:41-42 states that they are cast *into a furnace of fire: there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth*. Matthew 22:13 states that they *cast him out into the outer darkness; there shall be the weeping and the gnashing teeth*. Matthew 24:51 states that it is a place of *weeping and the gnashing of teeth*. Matthew 25:30 states in *outer darkness: there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth*. Luke 16:19-31 points out that the rich man could not pass from his place in Hell to Lazarus in Abraham's bosom; there was no crossing the line, and no future opportunity to do so. John 8:21 and 24 states that unless one believes, he will die in his sins and there is no possibility of belief after dying in sin. Second Peter 2:4 states that the unbelievers are committed *to pits of darkness to be reserved unto judgment* of the Great White Throne. Second Peter 2:9 says that *the unrighteous* are kept under judgment until *the day of judgment*. Jude 7 states that they are *suffering the punishment of eternal fire*. Jude 13 states that *the blackness of darkness* has *been reserved for ever*.

All these passages show that the unbelieving dead are seen as being in a fixed state which cannot be altered.

(3) The Basis of the Final Judgment

The third argument is to point out that the final judgment is based on deeds done in the flesh and not on what happens in the intermediate state (Mat. 7:22-23; 10:32-33; 25:31-46; Lk. 12:46-48; II Cor. 5:9-10; Gal. 6:7-8; II Thes. 1:7-10).

(4) The Final Decision Made in this Life

The fourth argument is that, according to Scripture, the final decision is made in this life (II Cor. 6:2; Heb. 9:27).

(5) The Contradiction to Scripture

The fifth argument is that any form of universalism is directly contrary to Scripture (Mat. 25:46; Jn. 5:29; Rev. 20:11-15).

2. Soul-Sleeping

The second and more popular false view is known as "soul-sleeping." The meaning of soul-sleeping is that upon death the soul, the immaterial part of man, goes into unconscious sleep and the person who dies remains totally unconscious in body and soul until the resurrection. This false teaching of soul-sleeping will be discussed in two main parts.

a. Arguments in Favor of Soul-Sleeping

There are three main arguments that those who believe in soul-sleeping use to defend their position.

(1) The Dead Viewed as Sleeping

The first one is to refer to passages of Scripture that speak of the dead as "sleeping." Since there are passages of Scripture that describe the dead as sleeping, they conclude from these passages that it is the soul which sleeps.

In the Old Testament, these are found in Psalm 13:3 and Daniel 12:2. In the New Testament: Matthew 9:24; 27:52; Mark 5:39; Luke 8:52; John 11:11-14; Acts 7:60; 13:36; I Corinthians 15:6, 18, 20, 51; I Thessalonians 4:13-14; and II Peter 3:4. These verses speak of the dead as sleeping; therefore, some teach from these passages that the soul sleeps.

(2) The Dead Viewed as in an Unconscious State

A second argument that they like to use is to point to verses which speak of the dead as being in "a state of unconsciousness;" therefore, the soul sleeps in an unconscious state until the resurrection. The passages they use are all in the Old Testament: Psalm 6:5: *in death there is no remembrance;* Psalm 30:9:... *when I go down to the pit? Shall I praise you?*; Psalm 115:17: *The dead do not praise Jehovah,* they *go down in silence;...*;

Psalm 146:4 states that the *thoughts perish* at death; Ecclesiastes 9:5-6:... *the dead know not anything*, nor have the emotions of *love* or *hatred* or *envy*; Ecclesiastes 9:10 states that there is *no work,... device,... nor wisdom, in Sheol,...*; and Isaiah 38:18-19... *Sheol cannot praise you*, the dead *cannot celebrate you*.

These verses appear to speak of the dead as being in a state of unconsciousness, and that is the second reason some teach the doctrine of soul-sleeping.

(3) The Determination of Eternal Destiny

The third argument is that the eternal destiny is determined only at the final judgment, not upon death. The Scriptures they use to try to prove that point are: Matthew 7:22-23; 25:31-46; John 5:28-29; II Corinthians 5:10; and Revelation 20:11-15. On the basis of these verses, they teach that eternal destiny is determined only at final judgment, not at death. This is also used as evidence of unconscious soul-sleeping upon death until the resurrection.

b. Arguments Against Soul-sleeping

(1) Concerning the Term "Sleep"

The first argument concerns the term "sleep" when it is used of death. Whenever the Bible speaks of death in the sense of sleep, it is always used of the physical body and not the soul, because the appearance of a sleeping body and a dead body are very much the same. So when the Bible speaks of sleep in the sense of death, it is only used of the body, not the soul.

Furthermore, it should be pointed out that whenever the Bible uses the term "sleep" in reference to death, uniquely, it is never used of unbelievers. It is a term used only of believers, which shows God's viewpoint of the death of a believer. From God's perspective, the death of a believer is a temporary suspension of physical activity. For example, in physical sleep there is a temporary suspension of physical activity until one wakes up, but there is no suspension of the activity of the mind, the soul-spirit, and all the subconscious continues to operate. That is the way the Bible speaks of the believer. When he dies

it is viewed as sleeping in that it is a temporary suspension of physical activity until the believer wakes up in the resurrection, but there is no suspension of soul-spirit activity.

The word "sleep" in reference to death is used only of the physical body and it is only used of believers to show what God's viewpoint is concerning the death of a believer.

(2) Concerning Consciousness After Death

The second argument that can be used against the teaching of soul-sleeping is that the Bible clearly shows that men are conscious after death. There are clear passages of Scripture that speak of the dead as being in a state of consciousness. Three passages speak of the Transfiguration: Matthew 17:1-8; Mark 9:2-8; and Luke 9:28-36. One of those men, Moses, had died and yet Moses is conscious even though he had died. In Luke 16:19-31, in the story of the rich man and Lazarus, it is obvious that the rich man is conscious, Lazarus is conscious, and Abraham is conscious, even though they are all dead. Two are recently dead and one has been long dead. Indeed, their physical bodies are asleep, but not their souls.

(3) Concerning the Existence of Angels

The third argument that can be used in response to those who teach soul-sleeping is that the existence of angels shows that spirits can live and function apart from bodies. One of the reasons people teach that soul-sleeping must be true is because they believe that disembodied spirits cannot function. That is why some teach the existence of an intermediate body and others teach soul-sleeping. However, the existence of angels shows that spirit beings can and do live and function apart from bodies (Heb. 1:14).

(4) Concerning the Term Resurrection

The fourth argument that could be used in response to those who teach soul-sleeping is that the term "resurrection" applies only to bodies, never to souls. One will never read of a soul's being resurrected from physical death (Mat. 27:52).

(5) Concerning the Meaning of Death

The fifth argument is that the very meaning of death is that the believer enters immediately into God's presence. This is the clear teaching of Scripture: upon death, the believer enters the presence of God (Acts 7:59; Phil. 1:23; II Cor. 5:6-8; Rev. 6:9-11; 7:9-17).

(6) Concerning the Language of Appearance

The sixth argument that can be used in response to the teaching of soul-sleeping is that the passages which speak in terms of the dead being in a state of unconsciousness are not dealing with the soul's being unconscious as such. Rather, some of these passages that are used of the unconscious state are merely the language of appearance. They are in reference to the body. But the issue is not the body, the issue is the soul. Some of these passages deal merely with the inability of the dead to continue the processes that were normal while living on the earth, since the body can no longer function.

As for the Ecclesiastes passages, they record the conclusions of human philosophy and not the teaching of the Word of God. So even the passages which they use to try to show that men are unconscious after death do not teach soul-sleeping as such.

(7) Concerning the Determination of Destiny

The seventh argument that should be pointed out is that the destiny determined at the final judgment has to do only with the degree of punishment and not with the fact of punishment, present or future. There is present suffering for the soul with the worst to come after the final judgment. Now in Hell, only the soul is suffering, but later in the Lake of Fire, there will be suffering of both the soul and body. The verses that are used to try to prove that final determination is made only at the final judgement, not at death, too often confuse the various types of punishment. The issue of salvation is determined upon death; the final judgment determines only the degree of punishment. So like second probation, soul-sleeping is not the teaching of the Word of God.

APPENDIX IX

The Place of the Dead

A. *The Unseen World*

In the Hebrew Old Testament and the Greek New Testament there are a total of thirteen different terms describing the unseen world. These terms need to be understood to fully comprehend the place of the dead and the unseen world.

1. Sheol

The first term is the Hebrew word *Sheol* and therefore it is found only in the Old Testament.

a. The Scriptures

In the Old Testament there are a total of sixty-four references to this place, so there is extensive usage of this term. All sixty-four passages cannot be listed here, but its use is spread throughout the Old Testament, and it is not limited only to certain writers nor to a certain period of time. Among the Books of Moses, *Sheol* is mentioned in Genesis, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. In the historical books, it is mentioned in I Samuel, II Samuel, and I Kings. In the poetic books, it is mentioned in Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon. In the Major Prophets, it is found in the Books of Isaiah and Ezekiel. Among the Minor Prophets, *Sheol* is mentioned by Hosea, Amos, Jonah, and Habakkak. *Sheol* is a place known from the beginning to the end of Old Testament history.

b. The Deductions

From these sixty-four passages where this term is used, six deductions can be drawn concerning what *Sheol* was.

First: in the Old Testament period, *Sheol* was a place that both the righteous and the unrighteous expected to go upon death (Ps. 89:48). The righteous ones, the saints of the Old Testament, expected to go down to *Sheol* in Genesis 37:35; 42:38; 44:29, 31; Job 14:13; Psalm 16:10; and Jonah 2:2. The unrighteous also expected to go down to *Sheol* in Numbers 16:30, 33; Job 24:19; Psalm 9:17; 49:14; and Ezekiel 32:21.

Second: Although both believers and unbelievers went down to *Sheol* in the Old Testament, it was far more dreadful for the unbelievers than it was for the believers (Job 24:19; Ps. 9:17; 49:14).

Third: there are different levels or compartments in *Sheol.* The fact that there are references to *the lowest Sheol* teaches the fact that there are different levels in *Sheol* or there are different compartments in *Sheol* (Deut. 32:22; Ps. 86:13).

Fourth: the direction of *Sheol* was always downward (Gen. 37:35; 42:38; 44:29, 31; Num. 16:30, 33; I Sam. 2:6; I Kg. 2:6, 9; Job 7:9; 11:8; 17:16; 21:13; Ps. 30:3; Prov. 5:5; 7:27; 15:24; Is. 5:14; 14:9; Ezek. 32:21; Amos 9:2).

Fifth: *Sheol* was a place of consciousness and those who went down to *Sheol* were in a state of consciousness (Is. 14:9-10; Jon. 2:2).

Sixth: *Sheol* was not removed from God's jurisdiction (Job 26:6; Ps. 139:8; Deut. 32:22).

2. Hades

The second term for the unseen world is the Greek word *Hades*, and therefore is only found in the New Testament.

a. The Scriptures

Hades is mentioned in ten New Testament passages. Matthew 11:23:... *you shall go down unto Hades:...*; Matthew 16:18: *the gates of Hades*; Luke 10:15:... *you shall be brought down unto Hades*; Luke 16:23:... *in Hades he lifted up his eyes,...*; Acts 2:27 quotes Psalms 16:10:... *you will*

not leave my soul unto Hades,...; Acts 2:31:... *neither was he left unto Hades,...*; Revelation 1:18: the Messiah is said to *have the keys of death and Hades*; Revelation 6:8:... *his name was Death; and Hades,...;* Revelation 20:13:... *death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them:...*; and Revelation 20:14:... *death and Hades were cast into the Lake of Fire*.

b. The Deductions

From these ten references on *Hades* in the New Testament, seven deductions can be drawn. First: *Hades* is the same as *Sheol*. *Hades* is the Greek term for the Old Testament *Sheol*, so everything that is true of *Sheol* is automatically true of *Hades*. This is evident from the fact that while Psalm 16:10 used the term *Sheol*, when that verse is quoted in the New Testament (Acts 2:27, 31), it is called *Hades*. So *Sheol* and *Hades* are one and the same, *Sheol* being the Hebrew term and *Hades* being the Greek term. Second: it was a place for both the righteous and the unrighteous. In Luke 16:19-31 the unrighteous rich man is in *Hades*. But the Righteous One, Jesus, was also in *Hades*, according to Acts 2:27, 31. Third: *Hades* had two main compartments (Lk. 16:19-31). The section for the unbeliever was *Hades* Proper, and the section for the believer was known as Abraham's Bosom. More will be said about this later. Fourth: although both believers and unbelievers went down to *Hades*, it was especially severe for the unbelievers (Mat. 11:23; Lk. 10:15; 16:19-31). Fifth: the direction of *Hades* was always downward, never upward (Mat. 11:23; Lk. 10:15). Sixth: it was a place of consciousness, not a place of unconsciousness (Lk. 16:19-31). Seventh: *Hades* is a temporary state, not the eternal state (Rev. 20:11-15).

3. Abbadon

The third biblical term for the unseen world is *Abbadon*. This is a Hebrew word that means "destruction." Being a Hebrew term, all but one verse are found in the Old Testament.

a. The Scriptures

It is used a total of seven times in Scripture. Job 26:6:... *Abbadon has no covering;* Job 28:22: [*Abbadon*] *and death;* Job 31:12: *a fire that consumes*

unto [*Abbadon*]; Psalm 88:11: *Shall your loving kindness be declared in the grave? Or your faithfulness in [Abbadon]?*; Proverbs 15:11: *Sheol and Abbadon are before Jehovah:...*; Proverbs 27:20: *Sheol and Abbadon are never satisfied;...;* Revelation 9:11 calls *the angel of the Abyss* by his Hebrew name, *Abbadon*, and also gives his Greek name, *Apollyon*. The Greek word means the same as the Hebrew word: "Destruction."

b. The Deductions

From these seven usages, one can make three deductions. First: in three of the seven usages, it is paralleled with *Sheol* (Job 26:6; Prov. 15:11; 27:20). All of the six Old Testament references were from poetical books. Hebrew poetry is not based upon rhythm or rhyme, but upon parallelism. Hence, in these three cases *Sheol* is paralleled with *Abbadon* or *Abbadon* is paralleled with *Sheol*. Second: the term is used only negatively. There is not a single positive reference to *Abbadon*; all of them have a negative connotation. Third: *Abbadon* is a Hebrew name for the unbeliever's side of *Sheol* or *Hades*. It has been pointed out that *Hades* consists of two major compartments: a side for the righteous and a side for the unrighteous. The term *Abbadon* was a Hebrew name for the unrighteous' or the unbeliever's side of *Sheol* or *Hades*.

4. The Pit

The fourth term for the unseen world is the expression "the Pit." This is also an Old Testament name for the unseen world.

a. The Scriptures

All together there are twenty-three references to the Pit. Not all of them will be listed here, but the books where it is mentioned are: Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Isaiah, and Ezekiel, with most of the references being in Ezekiel.

b. The Deductions

From these twenty-three references, three deductions can be made. First: like *Abbadon*, it is always used in negative terms. There is never anything positive about the Pit, but only negative. Second: the direction

is always downward, never upward. Third: the term the Pit is a descriptive term for the unrighteous' portion of *Sheol* or *Hades* and so the term the Pit is synonymous with *Abbadon*. The latter is the proper name and the former a descriptive name.

5. *The* Abyss

The fifth term for the unseen world is the word *Abyss*. The word *Abyss* has at its root such concepts as "the netherworld" or "bottomless." *Abyss* is a Greek word, and therefore only found in the New Testament.

a. The Scriptures

This word is found in nine passages, and of these nine, seven are in Revelation. Luke 8:31: *not command them to depart into the Abyss*; Romans 10:7: *Who shall descend into the Abyss?*; Revelation 9:1: *the key of the pit of the Abyss*; Revelation 9:2:... *he opened the pit of the Abyss;...;* Revelation 9:11: *the angel of the Abyss;* Revelation 11:7: *the beast that comes up out of the Abyss*; Revelation 17:8: *The beast... is about to come up out of the Abyss,...*; Revelation 20:1: *the key of the Abyss*; and Revelation 20:3: *and he cast him into the Abyss.*

b. The Deductions

From these nine references to the *Abyss*, three deductions can be made. First: the direction is always downward. Second: it is never associated with human beings; it is always associated with fallen angels with the exception of the Antichrist. Since the Antichrist will be conceived by the power of Satan, he is connected with angelic beings and therefore also with the *Abyss*. Third: the *Abyss* is that section of *Sheol* or *Hades* which is a temporary place of confinement for fallen angels. When demons are cast out of people, they sometimes spend a temporary period of time in the *Abyss* and then they are released. So it is always a temporary place of confinement. Satan will be confined in the *Abyss*, but even for him it is temporary, for one thousand years' duration (Rev. 20:3).

6. Tartarus

The sixth term that speaks of the unseen world is the Greek word *Tartarus*.

a. The Scripture

It is found in only one passage of Scripture, II Peter 2:4:

> *For if God spared not angels when they sinned, but cast them down to hell, and committed them to pits of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;...*

b. The Deductions

Out of this one verse, five deductions can be made. First: it is called the *pits of darkness*, so it is given a negative connotation. Second: it is a place for fallen angels. Third: it is connected with fallen angels in connection with Noah. Whereas the *Abyss* is in connection with fallen angels in general, *Tartarus* is connected with fallen angels somehow related to the time of Noah. Fourth: the angels mentioned in this verse are obviously the same angels mentioned by Jude 6-7. Because of the connection between II Peter 2:4 and Jude 6-7, these angels are the same as the *sons of God* of Genesis six who intermarried with human women to try to corrupt the *seed* of the woman. Fifth: *Tartarus* is that portion of *Sheol* or *Hades* which is a permanent place of confinement for those fallen angels who sinned in Genesis six. While the *Abyss* is a temporary place of confinement for fallen angels, a place where fallen angels or demons come and go for periods of time, *Tartarus* is different; it is a permanent place of confinement. From this confinement, these angels will never be released, but will eventually go from *Tartarus* to the *Lake of Fire.* These angels will never be free again. The reason these fallen angels are kept in a special place, *Tartarus*, instead of the *Abyss*, is because of the special nature of their sin. These are the ones who in Genesis six took on male form and intermarried with human women in order to corrupt the seed of the woman of Genesis 3:15. What they produced was a grotesque race. It is because of the existence of that grotesque race that the wickedness of man reached its epitome, necessitating a worldwide flood to destroy all humanity with the exception

of one family, the family of Noah.

So then, *Tartarus* is that portion of *Sheol* or *Hades* which is a permanent place of confinement for those angels who sinned in Genesis six.

7. Hell

a. The Origin of the Word

The seventh term is "Hell." The English word "Hell" comes from a Teutonic root which means "to hide" or "to cover." There is no special Hebrew or Greek term for the word "Hell" in Scripture. That probably was not the best term to come up with, but that is the term with which the English-speaking world is familiar, so it must be used. But again, neither the Hebrew nor the Greek has a singular term that means "Hell." The concept of Hell is included in some of the concepts of *Sheol* and *Hades*, and are totally found in the concepts of *Abbadon* and the Pit. So while the Scriptures do not actually use a special term for "Hell," the concepts of Hell are definitely biblical. What people call "Hell" is what the Old Testament calls *Abbadon* or the Pit, the unrighteous side of *Sheol* or *Hades*.

Based upon what has already been stated about the unrighteous side of *Sheol* or *Hades*, and what has been stated about *Abbadon* or the Pit, this Hell contains unsaved humans only. It does not include fallen angels, because fallen angels are in two other places, the *Abyss* or *Tartarus*. While Hell contains certain concepts of *Sheol* or *Hades* and totally the concepts of *Abbadon* and the Pit, it excludes the concepts of the *Abyss* and *Tartarus*, for these places are for fallen angels only.

b. The Conditions in Hell

Based upon what is known of *Abbadon* or the Pit, one can determine the conditions of those in Hell. First: they exist as shades, merely shades with no more reality than that. Indeed, when the Bible describes the people already in the unrighteous side of *Sheol*, it describes them by using a Hebrew term that means "shades" (Prov. 9:18; Is. 14:9). Second: they are in torment (Lk. 16:23-25).

From what is known about *Abbadon* and the Pit, three things can be said about Hell. First: there is a total absence of righteousness. Second: it

is a place that is separated from God. Third: it is a place of judgment.

8. Gehenna

The eighth term for the unseen world is the word *Gehenna*, which is a Greek term. Three things should be mentioned about this place.

a. Origin of the Concept of Gehenna

Although the term *Gehenna* is Greek, the origin of the concept is from the Hebrew. It is actually a combination of two Hebrew words. The first word is *Gei* and the second word is *Hinnom*; *Gei Hinnom* means "the Valley of Hinnom," which is a valley outside the walls of Jerusalem. The Valley of Hinnom circles Jerusalem along the west side of the wall around to the south side, where it meets another valley known as the Kidron Valley, coming down from the east side of the city.

The Valley of Hinnom in the Old Testament was a place where some of the wicked kings of Israel practiced human sacrifice. The practice of human sacrifice meant that it was a place for the burning of humans (II Kg. 23:10; II Chr. 28:3; 33:6; Is. 30:33; Jer. 7:31-32; 19:1-15). So the origin of the New Testament *Gehenna* comes from the Hebrew words *Gei Hinnom.* The Old Testament concept of the burning of humans physically moves into the New Testament concept with the word *Gehenna*, and describes the unseen world and the eternal burning of humans.

b. The Scriptures

There are twelve references to *Gehenna*. Eleven of these references are in the Gospels and one is outside of the Gospels: Matthew 5:22:... *and whosoever shall say, You fool, shall be in danger of the* [*Gehenna*] *of fire*; Matthew 5:29: *not your whole body be cast into* [*Gehenna*]; Matthew 5:30: *not your whole body go into* [*Gehenna*]; Matthew 10:28:... *fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in* [*Gehenna*]; Matthew 18:9: *to be cast into the* [*Gehenna*] *of fire*; Matthew 23:15: *a son of* [*Gehenna*]; Matthew 23:33:... *how shall ye escape the judgment of* [*Gehenna*]*?*; Mark 9:43: *having your two hands to go into*

[*Gehenna*]; Mark 9:45: *having your two feet to be cast into* [*Gehenna*]; Mark 9:47: *having two eyes to be cast into* [*Gehenna*]; Luke 12:5:... *Fear him, who after he has killed has the power to cast into* [*Gehenna*];...; and James 3:6: *and is set on fire by* [*Gehenna*].

c. The Deductions

From these twelve references in the Greek New Testament, four deductions can be drawn. First: G*ehenna* is the eternal abode of the lost, both angels and men. Second: the punishment in *Gehenna* includes both soul and body. That is why *Gehenna* must not be translated as "Hell," nor should it be equated with Hell. Hell, as will be shown, is a temporary place and it is for the soul only, but *Gehenna* is an eternal place and it includes both the soul and the body. Third: it is an eternal torment. Fourth: *Gehenna* is associated with fire, and fire is the source of torment.

9. The Lake of Fire

The ninth term for the unseen world is the *Lake of Fire*.

a. The Scriptures

The term *Lake of Fire* is found in four passages of Scripture, all of which are in Revelation: Revelation 19:20: *the beast* and *the false prophet* are cast into *the Lake of Fire*; Revelation 20:10 states that Satan is thrown into the *Lake of Fire*; Revelation 20:14:... *death and Hades were cast into the Lake of Fire*; and Revelation 21:8, which states that the *Lake of Fire* is called *the Second Death.*

b. The Deductions

From these four references in Revelation, one can make four deductions. First: the *Lake of Fire* is the eternal abode of all lost ones, both angels and men. Second: the punishment includes both the soul and the body. Both *Death* and *Hades* are cast into the *Lake of Fire*. *Death* refers to the material part of man, the body; *Hades* refers to the immaterial part of man, the soul and spirit. The *Lake of Fire* is a punishment for both of these. Third: the *Lake of Fire* is the same as *Gehenna*. *Gehenna* is the proper

name and the *Lake of Fire* is a descriptive name. Fourth: the *Lake of Fire* is associated with fire and brimstone as the source of torment.

10. Abraham's Bosom

The tenth term is "Abraham's Bosom."

a. The Scripture

While in the rabbinic writings this is a very common term, in the Scriptures it is found only in Luke 16:22-23:

> *And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and that he was carried away by the angels into Abraham's Bosom: and the rich man also died, and was buried. And in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and sees Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.*

b. The Deductions

Although it is found only in these two verses, nevertheless six things can be deduced from these two verses.

First: Abraham's Bosom is for righteous ones only; there are no unrighteous ones in Abraham's Bosom.

Second: it is located adjacent to Hell. It is not in Hell, but is located adjacent to Hell, so that those in Hell, like the rich man, are able to see what is going on in Abraham's Bosom, though they have no way of getting there.

Third: while Hell and Abraham's Bosom are next to each other, they are separated by an impassable gulf. Although each side can see the other and those in them can converse with each other, they can not cross over from one to the other.

Fourth: Abraham's Bosom is that portion of *Sheol* or *Hades* which was a place for the righteous, whereas Hell was the place for the unrighteous humans.

Fifth: the term "Abraham's Bosom" is a figure of speech describing a guest at a feast, reclining on the breast of his neighbor. Just as in the Gospel of John, John was reclining at Jesus' bosom at the Feast of Passover, this is

what Lazarus was doing in Abraham's Bosom. This is a figure of speech of a guest at a feast, reclining on the breast of his neighbor or his host.

Sixth: Abraham's Bosom symbolized blessedness after death. While Lazarus did not do well when he was living as far as the material world was concerned, after death he was indeed in a state of blessedness.

11. Paradise

The eleventh term concerning the unseen world is "Paradise." The Greek word and its Hebrew equivalent means "a royal park" or "a garden."

a. The Scriptures

It is a New Testament term only, and it is found in three passages: Luke 23:43, where Jesus said to the other person dying on the cross: *Today shall you be with me in Paradise*; II Corinthians 12:4, which states that Paul was caught up into *Paradise*; Revelation 2:7, which speaks of the future: *the tree of life* will be *in the Paradise of God*.

b. The Deductions

From these three passages, three deductions can be made concerning Paradise.

First: it is a term describing the abode of the righteous ones, no matter where that abode may be at any point in time. In Luke 23:43, it is the same as Abraham's Bosom because at that point all the righteous one went down to the righteous side of *Sheol* or *Hades*, known as Abraham's Bosom or Paradise. Until the death of Jesus, Paradise was in Abraham's Bosom.

Second: according to II Corinthians 12:4, Paradise today is in Heaven. After the Ascension of Jesus, Abraham's Bosom was eliminated. Believers no longer descend down to Abraham's Bosom, but now go directly into Heaven. Today the believer's abode is Heaven, and so now Paradise is in Heaven.

Third: Revelation 2:7 speaks of the future, when Paradise will be in the New Jerusalem, which means that the abode of Paradise will change again. As the New Jerusalem on the new earth will be the abode of all

believers after the Messianic Kingdom, even so, Paradise is going to be in the New Jerusalem.

To summarize: from Adam until the Ascension of Jesus, Paradise was in Abraham's Bosom. From the Ascension of Jesus until the end of the Millennium, Paradise is in Heaven. Then after the Millennium and for all eternity, Paradise will be in the New Jerusalem on the new earth.

12. Heaven

Another term for the unseen world is "Heaven."

a. The Distinctions

The Bible speaks of three different heavens. Not all three are concerned with the unseen world. The first heaven is the atmosphere, because that is the heaven where birds are flying (Gen. 1:20, 26; Jer. 4:25; Hag. 1:10; Mat. 8:20; 13:32; Acts 10:12; 14:17).

The second heaven is what is called "space." This is the heaven where the sun, moon, and stars are said to be located (Gen. 1:14-18; 22:17; 26:4; Mat. 24:29; Heb. 11:12; Rev. 6:13). The first and second heavens are not part of the unseen world; they are visible.

However, it is the Third Heaven which is part of the unseen world. It is the abode of God; it is where God dwells (II Cor. 12:1-4).

b. The Scriptures

There are a total of thirty-nine passages of Scripture that speak about the Third Heaven. In the Old Testament, it is found in the Books of Genesis, Deuteronomy, I Kings, II Kings, II Chronicles, Job, Psalms, Ecclesiastes, Isaiah, Daniel, and Amos. In the New Testament, the Third Heaven is found in the Books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, II Corinthians, Ephesians, Colossians, I Thessalonians, Hebrews, and I Peter.

c. The Deductions

From these thirty-nine references to the Third Heaven, one can make a total of eight deductions.

First: the existence of the Third Heaven, the abode of God, has been testified of by eyewitnesses, for there are eyewitnesses who have seen the Third Heaven. Jesus, Who came from there, testified to its existence (Jn. 6); Paul was caught up to the *Third Heaven* to receive special revelation (II Cor. 12:1-4). The Apostle John saw a vision of the *Third Heaven*, and was even told to come up there to be shown things to come (Rev. 4:1). He witnessed things in Heaven and wrote about them throughout the Book of Revelation. So its existence has been testified to by eyewitnesses.

Second: the Third Heaven is the abode of God; it is where God lives.

Third: it is also the abode of the elect angels; this is where the good, elect, holy, unfallen angels reside as well.

Fourth: Heaven is a real and definite place.

Fifth: Heaven is always upward. It is above the earth, it is above the sky, it is above space. It is above the earth, above the first heaven and above the second heaven.

Sixth: it is also the place from where God rules providentially, by sovereignty; every aspect of His rule is from the Third Heaven.

Seventh: this is the place where God receives worship.

Eighth: it is now the home of departed saints. No longer do believers go down to Abraham's Bosom; they now go directly into Heaven. It is the home of the departed saints.

13. The New Jerusalem

The thirteenth term used to describe the unseen world is the New Jerusalem.

a. The Scriptures

The New Jerusalem is mentioned in three passages.

First: Galatians 4:26, where it is stated that *the Jerusalem that is above is free*, unlike the Jerusalem on earth that is in bondage.

Second: Hebrews 12:22-24, which speaks of the *Heavenly Jerusalem* as being the abode of God, the elect angels, and redeemed men.

Third: Revelation 21:1-22:5, which teaches that the *New Jerusalem* will be on the *new earth* and gives some detailed descriptions of what the

New Jerusalem is going to be like.

b. The Deductions

From these passages of Scripture on the New Jerusalem, one can draw six deductions. First: it is now above the earth; it already exists and it is now in the Third Heaven. Second: it is the abode of the whole Triune God; it is the abode of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. Third: it is also the abode of the elect angels; it is where the unfallen angels live. Fourth: it is also the abode of redeemed saints; it is where the redeemed saints are now. Fifth: the New Jerusalem is synonymous with Heaven; they are one and the same. One could also say that the New Jerusalem is now in Heaven, but either way they are in the same locale and are more or less synonymous. Sixth: in that future when the new earth is created, Heaven or the New Jerusalem will come down upon the new earth. The eternal abode of the Triune God, the elect angels, and the redeemed men will be in the New Jerusalem on the new earth. If one distinguishes between Heaven and the New Jerusalem, then one can say that believers now go to the New Jerusalem in Heaven, and eventually the New Jerusalem will be placed on the new earth, when the new earth is created after the Messianic Kingdom.

14. Conclusions

a. The Terms Sheol *and* Hades

First: *Sheol* and *Hades* are one and the same. *Sheol* is the Hebrew term and *Hades* is the Greek term for one and the same thing. The location of *Sheol* or *Hades* is in the center of the earth as can be seen in three ways. First: in the Old Testament it was called the "nether parts of the earth" (Ezek. 26:20; 31:14, 16, 18; 32:18, 24). Second: in Ephesians 4:9-10, *Hades* was called *the lower parts of the earth*. So the *Hades* in the lower parts of the earth corresponds to the *Sheol* in the "nether parts of the earth." Third: in Matthew 12:40, *Hades* is said to be in the *heart* or in the "center" of the earth. As far as location is concerned, *Sheol* or *Hades* is located in the center of the earth. That is one of the reasons why *Sheol* or *Hades* is temporary, because when this earth is done away with at the end of the

Messianic Kingdom, *Sheol* or *Hades* will no longer exist.

Second: *Sheol* or *Hades* has two primary compartments. One primary compartment was for the righteous ones, and this righteous side was known as Abraham's Bosom. Between Adam and the Ascension of Jesus, Paradise was located in Abraham's Bosom. The second primary compartment was for the unrighteous ones, both angels and humans. This second compartment has three parts. As far as humans are concerned, they are located in *Hades* Proper, better known among believers today as Hell. This part is also known by two other names: *Abbadon* and the Pit. The two other parts in the unrighteous side are for fallen angels. One of these is the *Abyss*, which is a temporary place of confinement for fallen angels. The other is *Tartarus*, which is the place of confinement for those angels who sinned in Genesis six. So *Sheol* or *Hades* had two primary compartments. The righteous side was known as Abraham's Bosom. The unrighteous side had three subdivisions of its own: for humans it is *Hades* or Hell, also known as *Abbadon* or the Pit; and for the fallen angels, the *Abyss* and *Tartarus*.

b. The Terms Gehenna *and the Lake of Fire*

The second conclusion to be drawn is that the terms *Gehenna* and the Lake of Fire refer to one and the same place. It is the final abode of the unrighteous ones, both angels and men. It should be kept in mind that *Sheol* or *Hades* is a temporary place, regardless of one's condition. The righteous side of *Sheol* or *Hades* has already been eliminated with the Ascension of the Messiah. The unrighteous side is also temporary, because the eternal abode of the unrighteous ones will not be Hell nor the *Abyss* nor *Tartarus*, but will be *Gehenna*, the Lake of Fire.

c. Heaven

Heaven is the abode of God; it is the abode of the elect or good angels; it is the abode of believers who have passed away; and it is the abode of the dead saints. It is the present place of Paradise. At one time Paradise was located in Abraham's Bosom, but now Paradise is in Heaven. Heaven is either the same as the New Jerusalem or the New Jerusalem is in Heaven.

B. The Place of the Dead in the Old Testament

1. The Scripture

Perhaps the best single passage that clearly pictures what the situation was before the death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Jesus is Luke 16:19-31. It is the story of the rich man and Lazarus. It should be noted that this is not a parable. Jesus did not call it a parable. Parables do not have proper names. It is a real story that Jesus told.

What is described in Luke 16:19-31 is the situation beginning with Adam until the Ascension of Jesus. When speaking of the place of the dead in the Old Testament, it does not mean Old Testament history only, but includes Old Testament history all the way through gospel history until the Ascension of Jesus. The dividing line between what is true concerning the place of the dead for the Old Testament saints and the place of the dead for the New Testament saints is the Ascension of Jesus into Heaven.

2. The Conditions from Adam to the Ascension of the Messiah

Four things can be pointed out concerning the place of the dead until the Ascension of Jesus from Luke 16:19-31.

First: every person who died, whether they were righteous or unrighteous, went down to *Sheol* or *Hades,* which, as was noted, is in the center of the earth.

Second: the righteous went into Abraham's Bosom, where Paradise was located at that time. While the animal blood sacrifices were sufficient to keep the Old Testament saint out of Hell, they were not sufficient to get them into Heaven. The Old Testament saint was saved the same way believers are saved today: by grace through faith. In both cases, however, there was the element of blood. Until the death of Jesus, the blood sacrifice that was necessary was that of the animal blood and the sacrificial system of the Mosaic Law. Because this was animal blood, the blood sacrifices only covered the sins of the saints, but did not remove them. As Hebrews 10:1-4 emphasizes, *it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats* [the blood of animals] *should take away sin*. The reason the blood sacrifices, while suf-

ficient to keep the Old Testament Saints out of Hell, were not sufficient to get them into Heaven is because the blood sacrifices only covered sin, but they did not remove it. Nevertheless, Abraham's Bosom, where Paradise was located, was a place of bliss for the immaterial part of the Old Testament saint or the soul of the Old Testament saint.

Third: the unrighteous went into *Hades* Proper, better known as Hell or *Abbadon* or the Pit. Unlike Abraham's Bosom, *Hades* proper or Hell, was a place of torment.

Fourth: there was an impassable gulf between the two sides of *Sheol* or *Hades*. It was possible to see across this gulf, it was possible to converse across this gulf, but it was impossible to cross over from one side to the other. Obviously, if it were possible, all of the crossing would be in one direction only, as no one in Abraham's Bosom would want to go to Hell, but those in Hell would definitely desire to enter into Abraham's Bosom. This was the situation from the time of Adam until the Ascension of Jesus.

C. The Place of the Dead Today

1. The Believers

The work of the Messiah changed the whole situation for the believers. In particular, three acts of the Messiah effected that change.

First: the death of the Messiah. When Jesus died, He died for all sins. He also died for all the world's sins of all time—those committed before His death and those committed after His death. It was also the death of Jesus that removed the sins of the Old Testament saints.

Second: the descent of the Messiah. When Jesus died, His soul, His immaterial part, descended into the righteous portion of *Sheol* or *Hades*. In Matthew 12:40, Jesus predicted that He must go down into the heart of the earth where *Sheol* or *Hades* is located. Ephesians 4:9 states that Jesus *descended into the lower parts of the earth.* First Peter 3:18-19 points out that in His spirit, Jesus *preached unto the spirits in prison*. These *spirits* were the unrighteous ones in Hell. Some have misunderstood this verse and taught that since He preached, He *preached* the gospel to them and gave them a second chance to be saved. However, the Greek word that is used here is not the Greek word that means "to preach the gospel," but

it is a Greek word that simply means "to make a proclamation." What happened when Jesus descended is that His spirit made a proclamation that His death guarantees the judgment of the unsaved. Jesus made the proclamation to those in Hell. Because of this, some assumed that Jesus descended into Hell and this He did not. He told the dying thief on the cross that on that very day, the both of them would be in Paradise, not in Hell. When Jesus died, His spirit descended to the righteous side of *Sheol* or *Hades*, Abraham's Bosom. As has been noted, if one were in Abraham's Bosom, he could see those in Hell and converse with those in Hell. So the spirit of Jesus descended into Abraham's Bosom and He made the proclamation that the death of the Messiah guaranteed their future judgment. Those who were to benefit from the death of Jesus were the souls of Abraham's Bosom only, not the souls of Hell.

Third: the Ascension of the Messiah. When the Messiah ascended into Heaven, He took the souls of the Old Testament saints with Him; *he led captivity captive* (Eph. 4:8-10). Those who had been captive within the confines of Abraham's Bosom were now taken out of Abraham's Bosom. All the righteous souls who had died before the death of Jesus ascended with Jesus into Heaven. As a result Abraham's Bosom, the righteous side of *Sheol* or *Hades*, has been eliminated and Paradise is no longer in Abraham's Bosom. Paradise is now in the Third Heaven (II Cor. 12:1- 4).

As a result of these three acts of the Messiah, the souls of saints today go immediately into Heaven. No longer is there a temporary "holding pattern." The moment a believer dies, he goes immediately into the presence of God. Second Corinthians 5:6-8 teaches that to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord, and the Lord is in the Third Heaven. Philippians 1:21-23 states that to depart in death is to be with the Messiah, and the Messiah is in the Third Heaven, seated at the right hand of God the Father.

2. The Unbelievers

As far as unbelievers are concerned, nothing has changed for them. What happens to unbelievers today is a continuation of what was true before the Ascension of Jesus. The souls of unbelievers still go down to *Hades* Proper or Hell.

D. The Place of the Dead in the Future

1. The Future of the Believers

a. The Messianic Kingdom

John describes the saints who are to take part in the millennial reign of the Messiah in Revelation 20:4-6.

Concerning the Church saints, in verse 4, those to whom *judgment was given* will be resurrected at the Rapture. The *judgment* spoken of here is the Judgment Seat of the Messiah, the *judgment* of the believer's works, which determines their position in the Kingdom. The Church saints will then return with Jesus at the Second Coming and they will co-reign with Him on earth for the one thousand years of the Kingdom.

The Tribulation saints, those who *had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus* will also be resurrected after the Second Coming. They will also co-reign, like the Church saints, with the Messiah for one thousand years.

As for the Old Testament saints, they will be resurrected only after the Second Coming (Is. 26:19; Dan. 12:2), and they will be inside the Promised Land during the Kingdom. The Old Testament saints will inherit all of the Promised Land.

b. The Eternal Order

The second phase of the future of the believers will be the Eternal Order or the Eternal State, which will be in the New Jerusalem. The New Jerusalem, which is now in the Third Heaven, or is the same as the Third Heaven, will come down upon that *new earth* which God will create after the Messianic Kingdom (Rev. 21:1-22:5). At that point, *Paradise* will be in the New Jerusalem upon the new earth (Rev. 2:7).

The future of the believers, ultimately in the Eternal State, will be in the New Jerusalem upon the new earth which God is going to create at that time.

2. The Future of the Unbelievers

a. The Eternal State

The unbelievers are going to remain in *Sheol* or *Hades* until the end of the Messianic Kingdom. It is only at the end of the one thousand years that the souls of the unbelievers will be taken out of *Hades* or Hell (Rev. 20:11-15). This removal of the souls out of Hell is known as the Second Resurrection because all the bodies of the unbelievers will be resurrected, and all the souls of unbelievers will be removed from Hell so, at this point, Hell is going to be eliminated.

After the Second Resurrection, in which the souls of Hell are removed and the bodies of the unbelievers are resurrected and reunited with those souls, all of these unbelievers will then stand before the Great White Throne Judgment. The purpose of the Great White Throne Judgment is not to determine whether they were saved or unsaved; that is determined forever upon death. The purpose of this Great White Throne Judgment is to determine degree of punishment, because some will suffer more severely than others.

After the Great White Throne Judgment will come the final abode of all unbelievers, which will be *Gehenna* or the Lake of Fire.

b. The Scriptures

The passages concerning *Gehenna* and the Lake of Fire were discussed earlier. From these passages it was determined that the eternal abode of the unbeliever is the Lake of Fire.

c. The Descriptive Phrases

There are nine phrases that describe the eternal state of the unbeliever. First: the *Gehenna* of fire (Mat. 5:22; 18:9). Second: the judgment of *Gehenna* (Mat. 23:33). Third: the *outer darkness*; as over against the place of light, this is the place of *outer darkness* (Mat. 8:12; 22:13; 25:30). Fourth: *unquenchable fire*; the Lake of Fire burns forever, so this is the *unquenchable fire* (Mat. 3:12; Mk. 9:43; Lk. 3:17). Fifth: *the eternal fire*; it emphasizes the eternality of the Lake of Fire (Mat. 25:41; Jude 7). Sixth: *the eternal destruction* (II Thes. 1:9); again, it is a view of a continuous, eternal, un-

ending destruction. It is a place of torment indeed. Seventh: *the furnace of fire*. Often the term *fire* is the issue, since that is the means of torment (Mat. 13:42, 50). Eighth: *the blackness of darkness*, again emphasizing the opposite of light (II Pet. 2:17; Jude 13). Ninth: *the second death*; the first death is physical death and *the second death* is eternal, spiritual death in the *Lake of Fire* (Rev. 2:11; 20:14; 21:8).

d. The State of the Unbeliever in the Lake of Fire

What is the state of the unbeliever in the Lake of Fire? It is a place where there is *smoke of...torment* (Rev. 14:10-11), a fire that is not quenchable (Mk. 9:48). It is a state of *weeping and gnashing of teeth* (Mat. 8:12; 13:42, 50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30; Lk. 13:28); it is a place of unholy associations (Rev. 21:8; 22:15); it is a state of suffering the wrath of God eternally (Jn. 3:36).

e. The Deductions

Eight deductions can be drawn concerning the place of the dead in the future for the unbeliever: first, it is a total deprivation of divine favor; second, it is an endless disturbance of life; third, it is a time of pain in body and in soul; fourth, there are pangs of conscience; fifth, it is anguish; sixth, it is a place of despair; seventh, it is torment; and eighth, it is an eternal state of consciousness.

f. The Duration

The duration of this kind of torment is eternal (Rev. 14:11). It carries the same duration as the eternal bliss for the saints (Mat. 25:46). It is stated that "their worm never dies" (Mk. 9:48).

E. False Views Concerning the Place of the Dead

There are two main false views and both of these originated primarily with Roman Catholicism.

1. *The Teaching Concerning* Limbus Infantum

The first false view is known as *Limbus Infantum*. This has to do with those who die in infancy. The word *limbus* is a Latin word which means "edge." In Catholicism the *Limbus Infantum* is a place at the edge of Hell; it is a place where unbaptized infants go. If an infant dies in an unbaptized state, he will not go to Hell because he was an infant, but neither will he go to Heaven because he was not baptized. Rather, they teach that there is a special place at the edge of Hell where an unbaptized infant goes. He suffers no punishment, but he is excluded from the blessings of Heaven.

This false teaching concerning the place of the dead can be criticized in two points. First: this entire view is based upon another false doctrine known as "baptismal regeneration," meaning that by means of water baptism one can be saved. They believe that if an infant is baptized, those few drops of water save the infant spiritually. Because they believe in baptismal regeneration, because they believe that baptism saves the infant but a lack of baptism does not, they came up with a place that infants can go which is neither Heaven nor Hell, but a place at the edge of Hell.

Second: the Bible nowhere speaks of such a place. It is purely a tradition and one should not develop one's theology from church tradition. The Bible is the only authority for all matters of both faith and practice.

2. *The Teaching Concerning Purgatory*

The second false view concerning the place of the dead is the teaching concerning Purgatory. This is a more common false position.

a. The Concept of Purgatory

The word "purgatory" comes from a Latin term that means "to purge." Purgatory, according to Catholicism, is a place of purification for those who are not bad enough to go to Hell, but not good enough to go to Heaven. One spends a duration of time in Purgatory and then finally he can go to Heaven.

The length of time one must spend in Purgatory varies according to the needs of individuals. Time in Purgatory can be shortened by prayers,

by good works, by attending Mass, by penance, and by the purchasing of indulgences.

b. The Attempted Support for Purgatory

In trying to support this teaching from Scripture, six passages are used: Isaiah 4:4 speaks of the blood of Jerusalem being *purged*; Micah 7:8:... *when I sit in darkness, Jehovah will be a light unto me*; Zechariah 9:11:... *set free your prisoners from the pit....*; Malachi 3:2:... *for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap:...*; I Corinthians 3:13-17 speaks of the *fire* at the Judgment Seat of the Messiah; and I Corinthians 15:29 speaks of the baptism for the dead.

These are the six "evidences" from Scripture that they use to try to prove the doctrine of Purgatory. In reality, however, none of them actually teach any such concept as Purgatory. Not one of the passages describes a period of purging after death for the purpose of qualifying for Heaven.

Actually, their main support is apocryphal. The key proof comes from the *Apocrypha*, not from Scripture. The particular passage that they use in the *Apocrypha* is II Maccabees 12:41-45:

> *All men therefore praising the Lord, the righteous judge who had opened the things that were hid betook themselves to prayer and besought him that a sin committed might wholly be put out of remembrance. Besides that noble Judah exhorted the people to keep themselves from sin for so much as they saw before their eyes the things that came to pass for the sins of those that were slain. And when he had made a gathering throughout the company to the sum of two thousand drachmas of silver, he sent it to Jerusalem to offer a sin offering doing therein very well and honestly in that he was mindful of the resurrection. For if he had not hoped that were slain should have risen again, it had been superfluous and vain to pray for the dead. And also in that he perceived that there was great favor laid up for those that died Godly, it was a holy and good though whereupon he made a reconciliation for the dead that they might be delivered from sin.*

This is the main evidence that the Roman Catholic Church actually uses to teach the doctrine of Purgatory. This is why they have chosen to make the books of the Maccabees part of Scripture, though it was never accepted by the Jews and, in the time of Jesus, the books of the Maccabees were never classed among that which was known as Scripture.

c. A Critique of the Doctrine of Purgatory

Three criticisms can be leveled against the doctrine of Purgatory.

First: none of the six passages of Scripture that they cite actually teaches that there is any such place as Purgatory. Isaiah 4:4 talks about the forgiveness of the sins of Jerusalem at the end of the Tribulation. Micah 7:8 is a spiritual truth that even when the believer is forced into a place of *darkness*, God will be *light* unto him. This passage is not saying that that person is in Purgatory. Zechariah 9:11 is speaking of a future resurrection and not Purgatory. Malachi 3:2 speaks of the judgments of the Great Tribulation and not Purgatory. First Corinthians 3:13-17 speaks about the Judgment Seat of the Messiah after the Rapture in Heaven, not Purgatory. As for I Corinthians 15:29, whatever the baptism for the dead may actually mean, it does not even hint of a place of refining in Purgatory. So none of the Scriptures cited actually teaches that there is any such place as Purgatory.

Second: the apocryphal citation which was quoted above actually proves far too much for the Catholic Church, because the specific sin in that passage was the sin of idolatry. And yet idolatry is one of the "seven deadly sins" in Catholicism for which there can only be Hell, not Purgatory. So even when they use the citation from the book of the Maccabees, it proves too much because the sin was idolatry, and even in Catholicism that is not solved by Purgatory, but by Hell.

Third: the concept of Purgatory is a very clear denial of the finished work of the Messiah. The teaching of the New Testament is that when Jesus died on the cross it was a finished work and the finished work of the Messiah means that the sins of the believer have once and for all been purified. The believer does not need to go through a period of purging and purifying in Purgatory (Titus 2:14; Heb. 1:3). The work of the Messiah is finished, and that includes the total for-

giveness of sins, so that the believer need not go through a temporary period of purging in Purgatory before he can enter into Heaven.

APPENDIX X

The Remnant of Israel: Past, Present, and Future

Introduction

1. Meaning

The doctrine of the Remnant of Israel means that there are always some who believe within the Jewish nation as a whole, and all those who believe constitute the Remnant of Israel. Thus there are two Israels: Israel the Whole and Israel the Remnant. Ethnically, the two are the same, but spiritually, they are not. The Remnant at any point of history may be large or small, but there is never a time when it is non-existent, except immediately after the Rapture.

2. Ramifications

There are five ramifications concerning the Remnant of Israel. *First*: only believers make up the Remnant. *Second*: not all believers are part of the Remnant, for the Remnant is a Jewish Remnant and is therefore made up of only Jewish believers. *Third*: the Remnant is always part of the nation as a whole, not detached from the nation as a separate entity; the Remnant is distinct, but distinct within the nation. *Fourth*: this means that Jewish believers have a dual citizenship; they are part both of Israel and the Church. And *fifth*: within the concept of the Remnant, there is a twofold contrast: a contrast between the miraculous and the non-miraculous and a contrast between the noise and the quiet.

3. The Concept

The concept of the Remnant of Israel was apparent from the very beginning of Israel's history as they began to multiply. As a doctrine, the theology of the Remnant began with Elijah the Prophet, then was developed by the writing prophets, and continued through the New Testament.

A. The Past

1. Elijah—I Kings 16:29-19:18

a. The New Religious System—Chapter 16

With Omri, not only was there a new capital over Israel, Samaria, but also a new dynasty. However, Omri continued in the sin of Jeroboam (I Kg. 12:25-33). Jeroboam's sin was not a totally foreign religion, but a corruption of the true one: the worship of the golden calf. This was a corruption of Jehovah worship in that it reduced the God of Israel to an idol. In fact, when Jeroboam introduced the worship of the golden calf, he did so by using the same words Aaron used when he introduced his golden calf: "This is the god who brought you out of the land of Egypt" (Ex. 32:4).

In verses 29-34, when Omri's son Ahab ascended to the throne, he married Jezebel, a Phoenician princess from Sidon, and with her there is the introduction of an altogether new religion: the worship of Baal, the Canaanite storm-god. Thus the whole religious situation of Israel changed radically, and so did God's relationship to the Northern Kingdom. Into this new environment, God called Elijah, whose life was one of paradoxes or ironies.

b. The Historical Event that Gave Rise to the Doctrine—Chapter 17

Because of Israel's worship of Baal, God decreed a drought over the nation of Israel in verses 1-7. In this manner, the ministry of Elijah is

introduced. This is the first contrast between the miraculous and the non-miraculous. Food is miraculously provided for Elijah by means of ravens, but water is non-miraculously provided by means of a brook. Eventually, the drought affected the brook and it dried up. Obviously, God could have easily provided the water miraculously for one man as He did for two million in the wilderness over a forty-year period. But God does not always choose to work miraculously.

Instead, in verse eight God told Elijah to leave the country of Israel and go north to Phoenicia to the widow of Zarephath, a town belonging to Sidon. This is the first of many ironies in the life of Elijah. Jezebel came from Sidon to Israel; Elijah went from Israel to Sidon. Because of Jezebel, Jews are worshipping Baal, the god of Sidon; because of Elijah, by the end of this chapter Sidoneans are worshipping the God of Israel.

c. the Divine Duel—Chapter 18

When the drought had reached its most severe straits, in verses 1-24 God sent Elijah back to Israel for a contest with the prophets of Baal. The terms of the contest are for Israel to decide once and for all who is God. If Baal proves to be god, then let all Israel continue to worship Baal. But if Jehovah proves to be God, then let all Israel repudiate the worship of Baal and worship Jehovah alone.

This event provides the second contrast: the contrast between the noise and the quiet. In verse 29, the prophets of Baal go first and are characterized by noise, but as noisy as they get, the heavens remain silent. When it is Elijah's turn, he does everything in a quiet way by building an altar and praying a simple prayer. In response to Elijah's quietness, the heavens become noisy and in verse 38, fire from Heaven consumes the entire sacrifice in spite of its being drenched with water. Jehovah has proven Himself to be God. The prophets of Baal are slain and the drought comes to an end.

d. Elijah's Experience—Chapter 19

(1) Elijah's Flight—I Kings 19:1-8

And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and withal how he had slain all the prophets with the sword. Then

> *Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not your life as the life of one of them by to-morrow about this time. And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beer-sheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there. But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper-tree: and he requested for himself that he might die, and said, It is enough; now, O Jehovah, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers. And he lay down and slept under a juniper-tree; and, behold, an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat. And he looked, and, behold, there was at his head a cake baked on the coals, and a cruse of water. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again. And the angel of Jehovah came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat, because the journey is too great for you. And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God.*

Elijah's victory turned sour when Jezebel threatened his life. In verses 1-4, Elijah understood her actions to mean that Israel would not repudiate the worship of Baal and fled Israel for Judah; in a depressed state, he entered the Negev Desert and prayed to die. This provides another irony in Elijah's life: he is the only prophet who asked God to take his life, but in the end, he will not die at all! Instead, in verses 5-8, he was fed twice by an angel and continued his journey to Mount Sinai, where he had a unique encounter with God. Mount Sinai is the place where God entered into a covenantal relationship with Israel. There God warned Israel not to worship any other god and Israel committed herself to obeying all that God commanded.

(2) Elijah's Complaint

When God asked Elijah the purpose of his coming to Sinai, the place where the Mosaic Covenant was made, Elijah responded, in I Kings 19:10:

> *And he said, I have been very jealous for Jehovah, the God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and slain your prophets with the*

sword: and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.

This is a severe indictment against Israel by a prophet who suffered and struggled to bring the nation to repentance, but to no avail. This type of indictment, if true, required divine discipline.

(3) God's Response—I Kings 19:11-13a

And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before Jehovah. And, behold, Jehovah passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and broke in pieces the rocks before Jehovah; but Jehovah was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but Jehovah was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but Jehovah was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice. And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entrance of the cave.

God's response to Elijah's first indictment was to send three noisy things which did not contain the presence of God and then a fourth, quiet thing, which did contain the presence of God: the still small voice. This contained God's presence, so Elijah wrapped his face in his mantle, a natural Jewish response, as this was a common Jewish reaction whenever one thought he might be in the presence of God.

(4) The Interpretation of the Revelation—I Kings 19:13b-18

(a) Elijah's Second Complaint—I Kings 19:13b-14

Then God again asked him why he came to Mount Sinai (v. 13b). Elijah again issued the same indictment against Israel (v. 14).

(b) God's Answer—I Kings 19:15-18

And Jehovah said unto him, Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when you come, you shall anoint Hazael to be king over Syria; and Jehu the son of Nimshi shall you anoint to be king over Israel; and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah shall you anoint to be

> *prophet in your room. And it shall come to pass, that him that escapes from the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay; and him that escapes from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay. Yet will I leave me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which has not kissed him.*

The parallel of these verses with verses 11-13a should not be missed. In response to Elijah's second indictment against Israel, in verse 17 God will send three noisy things against Israel. While He will send all three noisy things, God's presence was not in them. The first was Hazael, the king of Syria, who corresponds to the wind. Just as the wind beat against the mountain, Hazael beat against Israel until he reduced Israel's holdings considerably (II Kg. 8:7-15; 10:32-33; 13:3, 22-25). The second noisy thing was Jehu, who corresponds to the earthquake. Just as the earthquake split the mountain, Jehu caused a civil war that totally destroyed the dynasty and House of Ahab, as well as royal members of the House of Judah (II Kg. 9:1-10:36). And the third noisy thing was Elisha, who corresponds to the fire. Just as the fire burned against the mountain, Elisha burned against Israel, for often where Elisha went, death followed (II Kg. 2:23-24). God did send all three noisy things, but God's presence was not in them.

In verse 18, God then tells Elijah that he was not the only one left who was faithful, for God had seven thousand others. These seven thousand were the Remnant of that day, quite small when compared to the nation as a whole. The Remnant corresponds to the *still small voice* of verse 12. The Remnant, in contrast to Hazael, Jehu, and Elisha, is the quiet thing; so quiet, that Elijah did not know they even existed. God's presence was in this Remnant. It was with this historical Remnant, the seven thousand of Elijah's day, that the doctrine of the Remnant of Israel began.

2. The Book of Immanuel—Isaiah 7:1-12:6

It is Isaiah the Prophet who put the Remnant concept into theological terms. It is found mostly in the unit composed of chapters 7-12 and called "The Book of Immanuel." In the Hebrew text, that name is found three times: in Isaiah 7:14; 8:8, and 10. In Isaiah 7:3-9, Isaiah told Ahaz, king of Judah, not to fear; He was to trust with quiet

confidence in the God of Israel. Instead, Ahaz chose to trust in the noisy Assyrian army to save him. Building on the contrast of the noise and the quiet, Isaiah 8:5-8 points out that the non-Remnant tends to put its trust in that which is noisy such as the Assyrian army, but the Remnant has a quiet confidence in the God of Israel and the One to come, Immanuel. This is contrasted by the waters of Shiloah that flow quietly, as over against the noisy Euphrates River. Ultimately the noise will destroy the non-Remnant, but Immanuel will save the believers according to Isaiah 8:9-11. Immanuel will thus become the point of division between the Remnant and the non-Remnant. In Isaiah 8:14-15, Immanuel will prove to be a sanctuary for the Remnant, but for the non-Remnant, Immanuel will prove to be *a stone of stumbling* and *a rock of offense*. In Isaiah's day, what separated the Remnant from the non-Remnant was their attitude toward the Law and the Prophets. In Isaiah 8:16-17, the Remnant placed its trust in the Law and the Prophets and waited upon the Lord.

So important was the doctrine of the Remnant to Isaiah that in Isaiah 7:3, he named one of his sons *Shear-jashub*, which means "a remnant shall return." With that naming, in Isaiah 10:20-23, Isaiah was looking forward to the future, final salvation of the Remnant of Israel. Until then, it was God who protected the Remnant and guaranteed its survival, according to Isaiah 46:3-4. But in the future, Immanuel will be the new point of division between the Remnant and the non-Remnant.

B. The Present

The doctrine of the Remnant of Israel teaches that there is always a segment of the Jewish people who are believers. The teaching of the New Testament is that the Remnant of Israel today comprises the Jewish believers in the Messiahship of Jesus. In the New Testament, that doctrine is primarily found in Paul's Israelology in Romans 9-11. There is one other passage on the Remnant of Israel relevant to Israel present, which is I Peter 2:1-10.

1. I Peter 2:1-10

a. Introduction—I Peter 1:1-2

By taking Peter's words in 1:1-2 literally, it is clear that this Epistle was not written to the Church at large, nor to a body of Gentile believers, but to Jewish believers living outside the Land within a majority Gentile population. Not once does Peter use the term "Church" in this Epistle. The term *Dispersion* is a technical Jewish term for Jews who live outside the Land. It is used twice elsewhere: John 7:35 and James 1:1, which all commentators agree refers to the Jews of the Diaspora. There is no reason to make I Peter the exception, since it fits well into Peter's calling as the Apostle to the Circumcision (Gal. 2:7-8). Furthermore, Peter keeps making reference to the fact that his readers live among Gentiles (I Pet. 2:12; 4:3). While many try to make the term *Gentiles* mean "unbelievers," that is never its Jewish usage, nor even a New Testament usage as a look in a concordance will show. Peter is using the term *Gentile* in its normal usage, meaning "non-Jew." Peter is addressing Jewish believers living among a majority Gentile population. Expressions such as *vain manner of life handed down from your fathers* (1:18) have clear Jewish overtones distinguishing these Jewish believers from their past lives in Rabbinic Judaism. In this section of the Epistle, Peter draws a contrast between the Remnant and the non-Remnant. His purpose is to show that, while the non-Remnant has failed in its calling, the Remnant has not failed. Thus what Peter states here may not necessarily be true of the Church as a whole, but specifically of Jewish believers who now make up the Remnant of Israel.

b. The Spiritual State of the Remnant—I Peter 2:1-3

Peter's statements show that he is writing to the Jewish believers who are in need of the milk of the Word of God.

c. Messiah: the Living Stone—I Peter 2:4

The Messiah Jesus is the Living Stone Who, though *rejected* by men, is elect and precious with God.

d. The Status of the Remnant—I Peter 2:5

With Exodus 19:5-6 clearly in his mind, Peter states that the Jewish believers, because of the kind of salvation they have, are two things. They are, first, *living stones* and so are part of *a spiritual house*. This *spiritual house* is the spiritual House of Israel, the Remnant of Israel or, in Paul's words, the Israel of God (Gal. 6:16). Second: the Jewish believers are *a holy priesthood*. This, too, was the calling of the nation as a whole. The nation failed, but the Remnant of Israel has not failed and are today offering *spiritual sacrifices* to the Lord.

e. The Distinction Between the Remnant and the Non-Remnant—I Peter 2:6-8

To explain the distinction between the Remnant and the non-Remnant, Peter begins with the status of the Remnant in verses 6-7a:

> *Because it is contained in scripture, Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: And he that believes on him shall not be put to shame. For you therefore that believe is the preciousness: . . .*

Verse six is a quotation from Isaiah 28:16 to point out that the *chief corner stone* is the Messiah who is *elect* and *precious* before God the Father, and those who believe in Him will not be ashamed. In verse 7a, he then makes the application and states that, while the Messianic Stone is indeed *precious*, it is only precious for the Remnant.

Concerning the non-Remnant, verses 7b-8 state:

> *But for such as disbelieve, The stone which the builders rejected The same was made the head of the corner; and, A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; for they stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.*

In verse 7b, Peter quotes from Psalm 118:22 to show that the Messianic Stone that would be rejected by the leaders of Israel was predicted. In verse 8a, he quotes Isaiah 8:14 to show that for the unbeliever, the Messianic Stone was to be *a stone of stumbling* and *a rock of offense*. In the Isaiah passage that was discussed earlier, it was shown that Isaiah

dealt with the contrast between the Remnant and the non-Remnant. Peter concludes with an application in verse 8b: the non-Remnant indeed stumbled, for those who rejected the Word were destined to stumble. Isaiah predicted that Immanuel would be the point of division between the Remnant and the non-Remnant. Peter teaches that this has now taken place and Jesus the Messiah has become that new point of division.

f. The Status of the Remnant—I Peter 2:9-10

This passage concludes with a further description of the status of the Remnant in verse 9a:

> *But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, . . .*

With Exodus 19:5-6 still in mind, Peter now adds four other descriptions to show the position of the Remnant in contrast to Israel the Whole. First: they are *an elect race*, based on Isaiah 43:20. Being *elect* shows that they were chosen at God's initiative (I Pet. 2:4, 6). This is a reference to their individual election. The use of the term *race* shows that Peter is also dealing with their national election. The Church, however, is not a race; it is composed of believers from all races. Second: the Remnant of Israel is *a royal priesthood*. In verse five, the Remnant was called *a holy priesthood*, emphasizing their right to approach the Heavenly Sanctuary. Now, they are also *a royal priesthood*. Since the High Priest, Jesus, is a priest-king after the Order of Melchizedek (Heb. 7:1-28), these believers are therefore *a royal priesthood*, for they are both priests and kings. For now, they are functioning as priests (Heb. 13:15-16), but in the future they will function as kings, exercising royal authority in the Messianic Kingdom (Rev. 5:10; 20:6). While it is true that all believers constitute a priesthood, the priesthood of all believers cannot legitimately be derived from this passage; rather, the concept of the priesthood of the believer is taught in Revelation 1:6; 5:10; and 20:6. Third: the believing Jewish Remnant is *a holy nation*. Israel became a nation at Mount Sinai and was called upon to be *holy* and separated from sin to God. However, the nation as a whole failed, but the Remnant has not failed. The Church is not a nation (Rom. 10:19). It is composed of believers from all na-

tions. Fourth: they are *a people for God's own possession*. This is based not only on Exodus 19:5-6, but also on Deuteronomy 7:6; 14:2; 26:18; Isaiah 43:21; and Malachi 3:17. While they became a nation at Mount Sinai, they became a people with Abraham through Isaac and Jacob. The Remnant is *God's own possession*, for those Jewish believers were purchased by the blood of the Messiah, and therefore belong uniquely to God (I Pet. 1:18-19).

Having described the status of the Remnant in this way, Peter next gives the purpose for their election in verse 9b:

> *That ye may show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: . . .*

The background to this concept is Isaiah 43:20-21. They are to *show forth the excellencies* or the attributes of the God *who called* them *out of darkness and into his marvellous light*. They are to proclaim the message to those outside.

In verse ten, this section concludes with a reference to Hosea 1:10-2:1, 23:

> *Who in time past were no people, but now are the people of God: who had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.*

Formerly, they were part of the non-Remnant; spiritually, *in time past*, they *were no people* and *had not obtained mercy*. Now they are members of the Remnant, *the people of God*, and *now have obtained mercy*.

g. Summary

To summarize the status of the Remnant, Peter is not drawing a distinction between Israel and the Church or between unbelieving Jews and believing Gentiles. The distinction is between Jews who believe and Jews who do not believe. His point is that while Israel as a whole failed, the believing Remnant of Israel has not failed, thus the Remnant of Israel is fulfilling the calling of the nation as a whole. Paul will make the same point in his theology of Israel in Romans 9, 10, and 11.

2. Romans 9:1-11:24

a. The Theology of Israel's Rejection—Romans 9:1-29

(1) Paul's Sorrow and Israel's Privileges—Romans 9:1-5

Paul introduces his theme on the theology of Israel by pointing to his own sorrow and describes his own emotions over Israel's rejection in verses 1-3:

> *I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience bearing witness with me in the Holy Spirit, that I have great sorrow and unceasing pain in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were anathema from Christ for my brethren's sake, my kinsmen according to the flesh: . . .*

Having that strong Jewish and Pharisaic background, Paul realized that the truth had to be affirmed at the mouth of two or three witnesses. He presents two witnesses to the fact that he is deeply sorrowed over the issue of Israel's rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus in verse one: his *conscience*, and *the Holy Spirit*. Paul's *conscience* and *the Holy Spirit* are bearing witness that he is saying the truth about something. In verse two, that "something" is the fact that Paul has *great sorrow*. The Greek word means "grief," "to be in a state of mind that is projecting grief." He also has *unceasing pain*, which is the physical expression of that mental anguish. Paul can truly testify by his conscience and through the Holy Spirit that he had great mental anguish over Israel, and this mental anguish resulted in physical pain. Paul was that concerned over his own people. Paul then expressed his desire in verse three: *I could wish*. In the Greek, this is an imperfect tense emphasizing continuous action in times past that remains unfinished. Paul is wishing that he could be *anathema*, that he could be set apart for destruction if it would mean Israel's immediate salvation. In other words, he was willing to go to Hell and to the Lake of Fire if it would bring about Israel's salvation. This wish was not for the lost in general, but specifically on behalf of the Jewish people, Paul's *kinsmen according to the flesh*. These were not his spiritual brethren; they were his physical brethren, the Jewish people. However, he realized that this was not the way it was going to happen; he was simply expressing a personal desire.

Paul next outlined Israel's eight privileges and Israel's prerogatives in verses 4-5:

> *Who are Israelites; whose is the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom is Christ as concerning the flesh, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.*

The purpose of listing these privileges and prerogatives was to show that Israel really should have received the Messiah, but did not. This was their fault and not the fault of God.

(2) Israel's Rejection in Light of Biblical History—Romans 9:6-13

(a) The Two Israels—Romans 9:6

> *But it is not as though the word of God has come to nought. For they are not all Israel, that are of Israel: . . .*

Paul begins this unit in verse six with the word *But* to show he is about to do some explaining. The problem is not that the Word of God or God's promises have failed or have *come to nought*. The Word of God and His promises have not failed. Paul then uses biblical history to show that Jews are not heirs of blessing just because they are the natural seed of Abraham. While certain blessings come because of the natural seed, there are other blessings of God which are conditioned upon other matters. Spiritual blessings that deal with the issue of salvation are not conditioned purely upon being the natural seed of Abraham, because physical descent by itself was not enough. While it did put one within the scope of the Abrahamic Covenant, something else was required. This verse is the key to this entire unit. The Greek word translated *come to nought* means "to fall out" or "to fall from." It is a Greek word that is used to speak of withering flowers in James 1:11 and I Peter 1:24, and of falling away from a straight course in Acts 27:17, 26, and 29. The point is that the Word of God has not fallen off its straight course, which is the plan and the purpose of God. The Word of God has not suddenly been frustrated by Israel's rejection. In fact, the rejection by Israel of the Messiahship of Jesus was very much part of the divine program and plan.

He then expounds using the particle *for*. As it is here, this is often used as an explanatory particle. The explanation is: *they are not all Israel, that are of Israel*. It is important that this verse not be misunderstood. Paul is not distinguishing between Israel and the Church, nor between Jews and Gentiles. Rather, he is distinguishing between Jews who believe and Jews who do not believe, or between the Remnant and the non-Remnant. The first expression, *all Israel*, refers to the believing Jewish Remnant, the believing natural seed. The second expression, *of Israel*, refers to the entire nation, the whole natural seed. In other words, not the whole of Israel is the true Israel or believing Israel. What Paul is saying is that there are two Israels: *first*, Israel the Whole, which includes all physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and *second*, within the nation of Israel, there is the Israel of God, the believing Israel, the true Israel. The contrast is between Jews who believe and Jews who do not believe. There is one Israel that constitutes the entire nation, and within the whole of physical Israel, there is a spiritual Israel. Spiritual Israel is never stated by Scripture to be the Church. It is always those Jews, within the nation, who believe. In this way, Paul expounds or elaborates upon statements he made in Romans 2:28-29.

(b) The Two Illustrations—Romans 9:7-13

After stating that there are two Israels and that there is a distinction between Israel as a whole and Israel as the believing Remnant, Paul then gives two illustrations from the Old Testament. The first illustration is that of Ishmael and Isaac in verses 7-9:

> *Neither, because they are Abraham's seed, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall your seed be called. That is, it is not the children of the flesh that are children of God; but the children of the promise are reckoned for a seed. For this is a word of promise, According to this season will I come, and Sarah shall have a son.*

The purpose of this first illustration is to point out that physical descendants who believe are Abraham's real children. Not to all physical descendants, but only to those physical descendants, *the children of promise*, are these promises given.

The second illustration is that of Esau and Jacob in verses 10-13:

> *And not only so; but Rebecca also having conceived by one, even by our father Isaac – for the children being not yet born, neither having done anything good or bad, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calls, it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. Even as it is written, Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.*

In the first illustration, the two sons had the same father but different mothers. In the second illustration, the two sons had the same father and mother; in fact, they were twins.

Through these two illustrations, Paul says four things. *First*: although Israel has failed, God's Word has not failed; God's plan is still working its way out, and everything is going according to plan. *Second*: the spiritual blessings do not come through one's physical descent or personal merit. *Third*: they come by the grace of God, due solely to the will of God. *Fourth*: physical descent alone will not obtain these promises; they are obtained by physical descent and its spiritual appropriation. What he is not saying, and indeed will not say, is that the promises were taken away from physical Israel and given to the Church. What he is saying is that these promises are still going to be given to physical Israel, but only to that part of physical Israel that believes. As in I Peter 2:1-10, it is the Remnant of Israel that is attaining the spiritual promises.

(3) Israel's Rejection in Light of Biblical Principles— Romans 9:14-29

To summarize this section, Paul shows that Israel's rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus did not mean that God's plan and program had come to naught, that it had fallen short, or that it had fallen aside; rather, this was all proceeding according to divine plan. It was in the program of God that Israel would reject the Messiahship of Jesus, and it is because of Israel's rejection of His Messiahship that mercy was extended to the Gentiles. The mercy shown to the Gentiles was not to the total exclusion of the Jews, however, because there is a Remnant coming to saving faith even among the Jews. There are vessels of mercy among both Jews and Gentiles, and there are vessels of wrath among both Jews and Gentiles. The reason the gospel went out freely among the Gentiles is because Israel as a nation had

rejected it. It is something God had already planned in the Old Testament, because what Paul teaches here is what Isaiah predicted in Isaiah 49:1-13.

b. The Explanation of Israel's Rejection—Romans 9:30-10:21

In the previous section, Paul dealt with Israel's rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus from the standpoint of divine sovereignty. In this section, he explains why Israel failed from the standpoint of human responsibility.

(1) The Stumbling of the People—Romans 9:30-33

Paul begins by describing a paradox in verses 30-31:

> *What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, who followed not after righteousness, attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith: but Israel, following after a law of righteousness, did not arrive at that law.*

In verse 30, the Gentiles did not have *a law of righteousness* to quicken their moral sensibilities like the Jews did; neither were they seeking to attain righteousness like the Jews. Yet these Gentiles did attain righteousness, because they came on the basis of faith, not works. But in verse 31, Israel, that did pursue after righteousness, did not obtain it.

Paul then explained the paradox in verse 32a:

> *Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by works.*

The reason Israel did not obtain righteousness was because they did not come to it on the basis of faith; rather, they trusted their own works that, in the end, failed to bring them to righteousness. So Israel that sought it failed to attain it because they were trying to attain it by works. The Gentiles that did not seek it did attain it in the end, because they found it by faith.

Paul then deals with the result in verses 32b-33:

> *They stumbled at the stone of stumbling; even as it is written, Behold, I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling and a rock*

> *of offense: And he that believes on him shall not be put to shame.*

The result of seeking it by works and not by faith is given in verse 32b: *They stumbled at the stone of stumbling*. It was Israel's avoidance of faith and insistence upon works that caused the problem. This was due to the guilt of Israel in stumbling at the doctrine of righteousness by faith in the Messiah. Their trying to attain righteousness by works carried with it the attitude of rejection of the Messiah Himself. Salvation is by grace through faith in the Messiah alone, plus nothing. In this verse, Jesus became the *stone of stumbling* because they must trust Him for salvation. When they failed to trust Him, they stumbled over Him and, as a result, they failed to attain righteousness. They sought righteousness through the Law and they stumbled.

In verse 33, Paul quotes Isaiah 8:14, which confirms the twofold attitude of both stumbling and rejection. Jesus' offer of salvation by pure faith in Him, apart from works, proved to be two things: a Stone of Stumbling and a Rock of Offense. They stumbled over the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith plus nothing, and then they were offended by it. Paul then quotes Isaiah 28:16 concerning those who believe: they will not be ashamed of this doctrine of salvation. The Jewish Remnant did not stumble over Jesus. For the Jewish believer, Jesus is not the Stone of Stumbling nor the Rock of Offense; He is *a sanctuary* (Is. 8:14) and *the preciousness* (I Pet. 2:1-10).

The picture of the Messiah as a Stone of Stumbling and a Rock of Offense was first taught by Isaiah and developed by Paul and Peter. All three point out the distinction between the Remnant and the non-Remnant in relationship to this Stone.

(2) Israel's Ignorance of the Channel of Salvation— Romans 10:1-11

To summarize: Salvation is by grace through faith in the Messiah and not by the works of the Law.

(3) Israel's Ignorance of the Universal Character of Salvation— Romans 10:12-13

The first line of ignorance led to the faulty conclusion and second line of ignorance: that God intended to save only Jews.

> *For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek: for the same Lord is Lord of all, and is rich unto all that call upon him: for, Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*

(4) Israel's Ignorance of the Universal Preaching of the Gospel—Romans 10:14-21

The second line of ignorance led to the third: that there was no need to proclaim a message of salvation to the Gentiles, since God intended to save only Jews.

c. The Consolation of Israel's Rejection—Romans 11:1-24

(1) The Rejection by Israel is Not Total—Romans 11:1-10

> *I say then, Did God cast off his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.*

The word *then* connects verse one with Romans 10:21, which portrays Israel in unbelief. He begins with a question: *Did God cast off his people?* This question is based on the statement in Romans 10:21 and shows that the *people* of these two verses must be the same, national Israel. In these verses, Paul taught that Israel's rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus is not complete or total, because even today there are Jewish people coming to a saving knowledge of the Messiahship of Jesus. The answer comes quickly: *God forbid*, or more strongly in the Greek, "May it never be!" "Perish the thought!" The problem was not that God had *cast off his people*. The fact that Israel rejected the Messiahship of Jesus does not mean that God has rejected Israel. Even in unbelief, they are still His people. As Paul states, God did not cast off His people. If He had, it would mean that no single Jew could ever be saved. To prove it, Paul first cites himself as an example. The fact that Paul himself was a Jewish believer showed two things. *First*: it showed that Israel's rejection of the Messiah was not total. *Second*: it showed that God has not rejected or cast off His people. Otherwise, Paul would not have been saved. Although the majority do not believe, still God has not cast off His people; He has not rejected His elect nation. The fact that Paul refers to Israel as *his people* in the present age shows that

they are still the Chosen People.

Paul then brings out the choice of God in verse 2a:

> *God did not cast off his people which he foreknew.*

The relationship between God and His people is that of foreknowledge. God had, in His foreknowledge, chosen Israel in spite of His knowledge that Israel would reject the Messiahship of Jesus. The very concept of the foreknowledge of God forbids the concept of the casting off of Israel. Since Israel was chosen, God could not cast off Israel.

Then to show that Paul was not alone in his Jewish faith of the Messiahship of Jesus, he next deals with the calling of the Remnant, in verses 2b-10. There are many other Jews who have come to saving faith, both in the past and at the present time. Paul gives the historical example of Elijah in verses 2b-4:

> *Or know ye not what the scripture says of Elijah? how he pleaded with God against Israel: Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have digged down your altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. But what says the answer of God unto him? I have left for myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to Baal.*

The point is to show that God has always had a Remnant, although the Remnant may have been quite small at times. While apostasy was general, it was not universal among Jews. The point Paul is making with the example of Elijah is that what is true today has always been true: it is the Remnant that comes to saving faith. The Remnant in Elijah's day was only *seven thousand* strong. What has happened since the ministry of Jesus is nothing new because throughout Jewish history, the majority have always been in the state of unbelief.

After giving the example of Elijah, Paul gave the application in verse five:

> *Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.*

The expression *Even so* is the comparison and the word *then* is the inference; what was true then is true now: *there is a remnant according to the election of grace*. By declaring that it is *the election of grace*, Paul gave the standard according to which the Remnant comes into existence. It is not on

the basis of the Law of Moses (Rom. 10:4), but on the basis of grace. Paul uses the Greek perfect tense, which shows that the Remnant has existed in the past and still exists in the present. The present Remnant of verse 5 corresponds to the *seven thousand men* of Elijah's day. This Remnant is the Israel of God of Galatians 6:16.

He then gives the explanation in verse six:

> *But if it is by grace, it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace.*

He drives the point home that *grace* and *works* are mutually exclusive; this is the same point he made in chapter 10. If it is *by grace*, it cannot be *of works*; the reason is that it would make "grace no longer grace." No one, not even the Jew, can make any claim on God, but God will save men only by grace though faith, among both the Jews and among the Gentiles. Insofar as the basis of salvation is concerned, Law and grace, works and faith, are mutually exclusive.

Paul next draws a logical conclusion in verse seven:

> *What then? That which Israel seeks for, that he obtained not; but the election obtained it, and the rest were hardened: . . .*

What then? The inference is: that which Israel the Whole sought, *he obtained not*. Israel the Whole sought righteousness, but as Romans 9:31-33 pointed out, they sought this righteousness on the basis of their own works and the works of the Law, thus they did not obtain it. The *elect obtained* righteousness, while *the rest were hardened*. Again, the distinction here is not between the Church and Israel or between Jews and Gentiles, but between Jews who believe and Jews who do not believe. That which Israel the Whole failed to obtain, Israel the Remnant did obtain. Jewish believers have obtained this righteousness of God. This same point was made in I Peter 2:1-10. While Israel the Whole has failed to obtain the righteousness of God, there is a Remnant within Israel that has not failed. It is this Remnant, the Jewish believers, that is the Israel of God. Again, the distinction is between the Remnant, *the election* that *obtained it*, and the non-Remnant, *the rest*, that *were hardened*.

In verses 8-10, Paul then quotes from the Old Testament to show that the present hardening of Israel was anticipated by all three divisions

of the Old Testament:

> *According as it is written, God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear, unto this very day. And David says, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, And a stumblingblock, and a recompense unto them: Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, And bow you down their back always.*

He quotes the Law in Deuteronomy 29:4, the Prophets in Isaiah 29:10, and the Writings in Psalm 69:22-23 to show that Israel as a whole has been hardened.

The point of verses 1-10, then, is that while Israel as a nation has failed to attain righteousness, this rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus is not a total rejection; there are Jewish people who do believe. These Jewish believers have attained the righteousness of God. At the present time, there are Jewish believers that are the Remnant according to the election of grace. So instead of using the existence of a minority of believers as evidence that God has cast off His people, in reality, it is evidence that He has not.

(2) The Purpose of Israel's Stumbling—Romans 11:11-15

The point Paul makes is that it was God's plan for Israel to reject the Messiahship of Jesus; for awhile, the gospel would go out to the Gentiles, during which time they were to provoke Jews to jealousy; until eventually, all Israel is saved. Paul builds upon Isaiah 49:1-13, where Isaiah taught the same thing: that the Messiah would come to Israel, Israel would reject Him, and the Messiah would then, for awhile, become the light to the Gentiles; but eventually, Israel will return to Him and be restored. Paul does not say anything new here; he just points out the way Isaiah 49 is being fulfilled in this day. In verses 1-10, Paul taught that there is still a remnant coming to saving faith. Now, in verses 11-15, he states that the primary way Jews now come to faith is by being provoked to jealousy by Gentile believers.

(3) The Olive Tree—Romans 11:16-24

Paul begins this segment by giving the illustration and the principle of the Olive Tree in verse 16:

> *And if the firstfruit is holy, so is the lump: and if the root is holy, so are the branches.*

The connecting word *if* or "now" provides the reason for believing in a future national restoration. The illustration is that of the *firstfruit* and the *root*, which refer to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the Abrahamic Covenant. They are *holy* because they were separated and consecrated by God for a divine purpose. Israel as a nation is the *lump* and the *branches*. The principle is based on Numbers 15:17-21: the holiness or consecration of the *firstfruit* and the *root* is passed on to the *lump* and the *branches*. Just as the *firstfruit* sanctifies the whole harvest, the *lump*, even some day all Israel will also be sanctified. The Abrahamic Covenant made with the Patriarchs is the basis for the expectation of Israel's future national salvation.

The *natural branches* are the Jews or Israel and the *wild olive* branches are the Gentiles in verse 17:

> *But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them, and did become partaker with them of the root of the fatness of the olive tree; . . .*

The Olive Tree in this passage does not represent Israel or the Church; it represents the place of spiritual blessing. Israel is the owner of the Olive Tree, but Israel is not the tree itself. The *root* of this place of blessing is the Abrahamic Covenant. Paul makes the same point here that he made in Ephesians 2:11-16 and 3:5-6. Gentiles, by their faith, have now *become partaker* of Jewish spiritual blessings as contained in the Abrahamic Covenant. This Olive Tree represents the place of blessing and now Gentiles have been grafted into this place of blessing and are partaking of its sap. The Gentiles are not "takers-over," but partakers of Jewish spiritual blessings. In this verse, Paul spoke of the grafting of *wild olive* branches into a good olive tree. Critics of Paul have said that it is obvious Paul did not understand horticulture, because it is unnatural to graft a wild olive branch into a good olive tree. That is exactly the point Paul was making; it is unnatural for Gentiles to be grafted into this place

of blessing that comes out of the Abrahamic Covenant. In verse 24, Paul states that this is *contrary to nature*. Normally, such a graft would be unfruitful. The point he is making is that God is doing something that is unnatural: He is bringing Gentiles into the place of blessing based on the Jewish covenants.

Then Paul gives a warning in verses 18-22:

> *Glory not over the branches: but if you glory, it is not you that bears the root, but the root you. You will say then, Branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. Well; by their unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by your faith. Be not highminded, but fear: for if God spared not the natural branches, neither will he spare you. Behold then the goodness and severity of God: toward them that fell, severity; but toward you, God's goodness, if you continue in his goodness: otherwise you also shall be cut off.*

The warning is that the basis of Gentile blessing is faith, not merit; if Gentiles are to remain in the place of blessing, they must continue in faith. Israel's failure should be a lesson to them. He is not dealing with individual believers and unbelievers, but with nationalities of Jews and Gentiles. The Jews were in the place of blessing as a nationality, but because of their unbelief they were *broken off*. Now Gentiles are to be found in the place of blessing; but if they fail in faith, they will also be broken off from the place of blessing. This is not a loss of salvation, but a removal from the place of blessing. Gentiles are warned against boasting over the *natural branches*, for they are not self-sustained; they are sustained by the root: the Abrahamic Covenant, which is a Jewish covenant.

Paul then presents the argument for Israel's eventual restoration in verses 23-24:

> *And they also, if they continue not in their unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again. For if you were cut out of that which is by nature a wild olive tree, and were grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree; how much more shall these, which are the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?*

In verse 23, Paul points out that the only thing preventing Israel's restoration is

their unbelief, for God has full ability *to graft them in again*. In verse 24, he then gives the reason why all should expect Israel to be restored. Paul stated that it is *their own olive tree*. This Olive Tree, this place of blessing, belongs to Israel. How so? The place of blessing is based upon the four unconditional covenants God made with Israel. Because these are Jewish covenants, the place of blessing belongs rightfully to the Jews. This is part of Israel's advantage of Romans 3:1-2. Gentiles are merely partakers and are sharing in their covenant blessings. Because of this, one ought to expect Israel to be restored into it. For, if God would graft wild olive branches *contrary to nature into a good olive tree; how much more* will God graft back in the natural branches *into their own olive tree*. The fact that Israel owns the tree shows that Israel is not the tree, for the owner and that which is owned are distinct entities. Having spelled out the expectation, in the next segment, Paul declared that this is exactly what is going to happen some day.

C. The Future

1. The Remnant of Israel During the Tribulation

All individual Jews who become believers during the seven years of the Tribulation are part of the Remnant of Israel.[1] This includes the 144,000 Jews (Rev. 7) and those Jews of Jerusalem who become believers in the middle of the Tribulation (Rev. 11:13). It includes all individual Jews who become believers as a result of the preaching of the 144,000 or the Two Witnesses of Revelation 11. It also includes the Remnant of Revelation 12:17 that Satan will attack in a particular way.

2. The Faithful Remnant

a. Definition

There will be a large portion of the Jewish population who will become members of the Remnant of Israel only at the end of the Tribulation.

[1] For more details on this topic, see Chapter 13, The Great Tribulation: Additional Features and Facts.

These can be called the Faithful Remnant. Based upon all the passages involved, this group will make up the majority of the one-third of the nation that will survive the Tribulation. Throughout the Tribulation, they will be unbelievers as far as the Messiahship of Jesus is concerned and also unbelievers as far as the Antichrist is concerned. They are the "non-many" of Daniel 9:27 who will refuse to have anything to do with the covenant.[2] They are the ones who *shall not be in haste* of Isaiah 28:16. They are faithful in the sense that they will believe in the God of Israel to the extent of Old Testament revelation and this is their trust. However, at the end, they will come to know Jesus as Messiah.

b. The Fact of the Faithful Remnant—Isaiah 10:20-23

Verse 20 states that, unlike the rest of Israel, the Remnant *shall lean upon Jehovah, the Holy One of Israel*. In verse 21, Isaiah declares that ultimately they will return to the God of Israel, a return that can only be accomplished by faith in the Messiah Jesus. Verse 22a points out that in spite of the numerical strength of the Jews, only the Remnant will return to God. Verses 22b-23 talk about a decree of destruction that has been *determined* upon the whole earth, which the Remnant will survive. The words used here are much the same as those found in Isaiah 28:22 where the decree of destruction is issued with the signing of the Seven-Year Covenant, the event that begins the Tribulation. Synthesizing these two Isaiah passages, it is clear that during the Tribulation, the Remnant will survive the persecution of the Jews by the Antichrist and the massive destruction of the earth. Hence, they are referred to as the *escaped* of Israel in verse 20 and in Isaiah 4:2; 10:20; 37:31-32; Joel 2:32; and Obadiah 17.

c. The Protection of the Faithful Remnant—Isaiah 41:8-16

This is a promise to preserve the Faithful Remnant in the midst of tremendous persecution during Satan's campaign to destroy the Jews in the second half of the Tribulation.

---

[2] For more details on this topic, see Chapter 13, The Great Tribulation: Additional Features and Facts.

d. The Provision for the Faithful Remnant

According to Isaiah 41:17-20, just as in the Wilderness of Sinai God miraculously provided food and water for Israel, He will do so again in the Tribulation when the Jews flee to the wilderness. These miraculous provisions will cause them to reconsider their relationship to God. Just as God miraculously provided food and water for Israel in the Wilderness of Sinai, He will do so again in the Tribulation when the Jews flee to the *wilderness*.

In another passage, Isaiah 65:8-16, the prophet describes how on one hand God will supply for the Faithful Remnant, whereas He will withhold provisions from the apostates. This passage makes clear that while the apostates will be allowed to suffer and die, the Faithful Remnant will be divinely protected and provided with food and water. By this means, the Faithful Remnant will be able to survive the persecutions and devastation of the Great Tribulation.

3. The Faithful Remnant and Israel's National Salvation

a. Romans 11:25-36

With the connective and explanatory word *For*, connecting this passage with Romans 11:24, Paul made a clear declaration of Israel's final restoration in verses 25-26a:

> *For I would not, brethren, have you ignorant of this mystery, lest ye be wise in your own conceits, that a hardening in part has befallen Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in; and so all Israel shall be saved: . . .*

In verse 25, Paul pointed out that there were limitations to Israel's hardening in that Israel was hardened only *in part* and only for a temporary period of time. There was a partial hardening, but never a total hardening; this is also the point of Romans 11:1-10. The fact that there are Jewish people coming to saving faith proves that the hardening was partial. But Israel was hardened only temporarily, *until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in*. The Greek word translated *fulness* means "a full number" or "a complete number." In other words, God has a set number of Gentiles that He has destined to save into the place of blessing, the Olive Tree of

verses 16-24.

After the *fulness of the Gentiles* has come in, after that set number is reached, in verse 26a: *all Israel shall be saved*. According to Acts 15:14, one of the key purposes of the Church Age is to call out from among the Gentiles a people for His Name. This calling out from among the Gentiles will continue *until the fulness*, that set number of Gentiles, is reached. At that time, the Church will be complete and will be removed by the Rapture.[3] Then God will deal with Israel as a nation again, rather than just with Jewish individuals. This national dealing will lead to all Israel's being saved. When Paul stated *all Israel*, he meant all Jews living at that time, not all Jews of all time. In some circles, this verse has been misinterpreted to mean that all Jews will eventually be saved and, therefore, Jewish evangelism and Jewish missions are unnecessary. However, that is not what the passage teaches. For example, the Bible speaks of all Israel, the whole congregation of Israel, coming out of Egypt at the Exodus. Of course, not all Jews who ever lived came out of Egypt, but every Jew who lived at that time did come out of Egypt. This verse should be interpreted in the same way: every Jew living at that time will be saved. The *mystery* of this passage is not that of Israel's national salvation, for that was revealed in the Old Testament. The *mystery* is that of a partial, temporary hardening of Israel until the full number of Gentiles is reached. The *Israel* of this verse must refer to national Israel, for that has been its meaning the other ten times *Israel* has been used since chapter nine; this is something that even replacement theologians admit. There is no reason to make this verse the one exception, especially since it makes perfect sense and is a contrast to the Gentiles in the previous verse.

Paul next related Israel's future national salvation with its present status in verses 26b-29:

> *Even as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer; He shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: And this is my covenant unto them, When I shall take away their sins. As touching the gospel, they are enemies for your sake: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sake. For the gifts and the calling of God are not repented of.*

---

[3] For more details on this topic, see Chapter 6, The Eschatology of the Invisible Church.

Verses 26b-27 give the evidence of Israel's future salvation from the Old Testament by quoting Isaiah 59:20-21 and 27:9. This truth was then analyzed in verse 28a: *As touching the gospel, they are enemies for your sake*. The alienation of Israel in spite of the covenant promises is God's way of bringing Gentiles to Himself. As far as the gospel is concerned, they are enemies for the Gentiles' sake. Paul states in verse 28b: *but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sake*. The word *election* refers to Israel's national election as the Chosen People of God. The *fathers' sake* relates to the covenants God has made with Israel, particularly the Abrahamic Covenant made with the Patriarchs. God, being the Covenant-Keeper, will fulfill His covenants for His own sake. Part of that covenant promise is the national salvation of Israel. For now, Israel has been partially hardened. As a result, the hardened element is an enemy of the gospel. Eventually, God must bring the whole nation to Himself because *they are beloved for the fathers' sake*; He has made covenant promises to them that He must fulfill. Verse 29 states: *the gifts and the calling of God are not repented of*. The reason He must fulfill them is because of the unconditional and unchanging nature of God's promises. The *calling* has to do with Israel's national election; the *gifts* are the covenantal promises that are the result of that election. Neither are subject to being recalled; they are irrevocable.

Paul provided the principle for what is going to happen concerning the calling out of the Gentiles and Israel's national salvation in verses 30-32:

> *For as ye in time past were disobedient to God, but now have obtained mercy by their disobedience, even so have these also now been disobedient, that by the mercy shown to you they also may now obtain mercy. For God has shut up all unto disobedience, that he might have mercy upon all.*

He pointed out that unbelief has given God a chance to reveal His mercy, not only on the deserving, but also on the undeserving. Once the Gentiles were disobedient, *but now have obtained mercy*. Now, Israel is in disobedience, so the Jews have been put on the level where they are eligible for mercy: *For God has shut up all unto disobedience, that he might have mercy upon all*, and that is the summary of the gospel. This is *all* without distinction, not all without exception, because within this context, he is dealing with the nationalities of Jews and Gentiles, not with all individuals. He will have mercy upon all without distinc-

tion, meaning both Jews and Gentiles, but not all without exception. Obviously, not all people will be saved as individuals, but there will be salvation both among Jews and Gentiles as nationalities. If anyone is saved at all it is by God's *mercy*.

Paul concludes his Israelology with a doxology in verses 33-36.

b. The Contradiction and the Solution

According to Romans 11:25-27, all Israel will be saved. According to Isaiah 10:20-23, only the Remnant will be saved. This is not a contradiction if it is understood in the context of Israel's national salvation. As Zechariah 13:8-9 has pointed out, two-thirds of the Jewish population will be destroyed in the persecutions of the Tribulation. This will include the entire non-Remnant so that only the Remnant will survive, the *escaped* of Isaiah 4:2; 10:20; 37:31-32; Joel 2:32; and Obadiah 17.

Since all of the remaining one-third become believers, at that point, *all Israel* and the Remnant of Israel become one and the same. This is made clear in Micah 2:12-13:

> *I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of you; I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together as the sheep of Bozrah, as a flock in the midst of their pasture; they shall make great noise by reason of the multitude of men. The breaker has gone up before them: they have broken forth and passed on to the gate, and are gone out thereat: and their king is passed on before them, and Jehovah at the head of them.*

This is expressed in the parallelism of Hebrew poetry. The first parallel is in verse 12a in that *all of you* and *the remnant of Israel* are one and the same, for with Israel's national salvation, the whole nation now becomes part of the Remnant. Because of Israel's national salvation, Messiah returns to rescue them in verse 13.

4. The Faithful Remnant of Israel in the Messianic Kingdom

Since all Israel throughout the Messianic Kingdom will remain a saved nation, all Israel will remain the Remnant of Israel throughout that period. Everything said of Israel and the Kingdom will be true of the Remnant of Israel. However, certain verses do emphasize the Remnant motif in the

Messianic Kingdom and so, for the sake of completeness, these will be summarized in this section.

Concerning the regathering of Israel, Isaiah 11:11, 16 and Zechariah 8:6-7 picture it as the gathering of the Remnant. Micah 4:7 emphasizes the salvation of the Remnant. This means that the sins of the Remnant will be forgiven, according to Micah 7:18-20. This will also mean that the Remnant will spread the Word of God among the Gentile nations, according to Micah 5:7-8. The Remnant will also be in possession of the Land, according to Zephaniah 2:7, 9 and Zechariah 8:12. They will be sinless in the Land and live in security, according to Zephaniah 3:13.

APPENDIX XI

Old Testament References in the Book of Revelation

XI

As was mentioned in the first chapter of this book, there are over five hundred references to the Old Testament in the Book of Revelation. The following is a list of such references, but it makes no claim to being exhaustive or complete.

Some of these references back to the Old Testament do speak of the very same thing as the Revelation. However, in others, the Revelation merely borrows a phrase or motif for the purpose of developing a new area. This distinction should be kept in mind in the study of those Old Testament references.

Revelation	1:1	Daniel 2:28-29
	1:4	Isaiah 11:2
	1:5	Genesis 49:11; Psalm 89:27
	1:6	Exodus 19:6; Isaiah 61:6
	1:7	Daniel 7:13; Zechariah 12:10-14
	1:8	Isaiah 41:4
	1:12	Exodus 25:37; 37:23
	1:13	Daniel 7:13; 10:5, 16
	1:14	Daniel 7:9; 10:6
	1:15	Ezekiel 1:7, 24; 43:2; Daniel 10:6
	1:16	Judges 5:31; Isaiah 49:2; Psalm 149:6
	1:17	Isaiah 41:4; 44:6; 48:12; Daniel 8:17-18; 10:9, 10, 12, 15, 19
	1:18	Job 3:17; Hosea 13:14
Revelation	2:4	Jeremiah 2:2
	2:7	Genesis 2:9; 3:22-24; Proverbs 11:30; 13:12; Ezekiel 31:8 (LXX)

	2:12	Psalm 149:6; Isaiah 49:2
	2:14	Numbers 25:1-3
	2:17	Exodus 16:33-34; Isaiah 62:2; 65:15
	2:18	Daniel 10:6
	2:20	I Kings 16:31-32; II Kings 9:7, 22
	2:23	Psalm 7:9; 26:2; 28:4; Jeremiah 11:20; 17:10
	2:27	Psalm 2:7-9; Isaiah 30:14; Jeremiah 19:11
Revelation	3:4	Ecclesiastes 9:8
	3:5	Exodus 32:32-33
	3:7	Isaiah 22:22
	3:9	Isaiah 43:4; 49:23; 60:14
	3:12	Isaiah 62:2; Ezekiel 48:35
	3:14	Genesis 49:3; Deuteronomy 21:17
	3:18	Isaiah 55:1
	3:19	Proverbs 3:12
Revelation	4:1	Ezekiel 1:1
	4:2	Isaiah 6:1; Ezekiel 1:26-28; Daniel 7:9
	4:3	Ezekiel 1:26, 28; 10:1
	4:5	Exodus 19:16; 25:37; Isaiah 11:2; Ezekiel 1:13
	4:6	Ezekiel 1:5, 18, 22, 26; 10:1, 12
	4:7	Ezekiel 1:10, 10:14
	4:8	Isaiah 6:2-3; Ezekiel 1:18; 10:12
	4:9	Deuteronomy 32:40; Daniel 4:34; 6:26; 12:7
	4:11	Genesis 1:1
Revelation	5:1	Ezekiel 2:9-10; Daniel 12:4
	5:5	Genesis 49:9-10; Isaiah 11:1, 10
	5:6	Isaiah 11:2; Zechariah 3:8-9; 4:10
	5:8	Psalm 111:2
	5:9	Psalm 40:3; 98:1; 144:9; 149:1; Isaiah 42:10; Daniel 5:19
	5:10	Exodus 19:6; Isaiah 61:6
	5:11	Daniel 7:10
Revelation	6:2	Zechariah 1:8; 6:3
	6:4	Zechariah 1:8; 6:2

	6:5	Zechariah 6:2
	6:8	Jeremiah 15:2-3; 24:10; 29:17; Ezekiel 14:21; Hosea 13:14; Zechariah 6:3
	6:12	Isaiah 50:3; Joel 2:10
	6:13	Isaiah 34:4
	6:14	Isaiah 34:4; Nahum 1:5
	6:15	Psalm 48:4-6; Isaiah 2:10-12, 19
	6:16	Hosea 10:8
	6:17	Psalm 76:7; Jeremiah 30:7; Nahum 1:6; Zephaniah 1:14-18; Malachi 3:2
Revelation	7:1	Isaiah 11:2; Jeremiah 49:36; Ezekiel 7:2; 37:9; Daniel 7:2; Zechariah 6:5
	7:3	Ezekiel 9:4-6
	7:4	Genesis 49:1-28
	7:9	Leviticus 23:40
	7:10	Psalm 3:8
	7:14	Genesis 49:11
	7:15	Leviticus 26:11
	7:16	Psalm 121:5-6; Isaiah 49:10
	7:17	Psalm 23:1-2; Ezekiel 34:23
Revelation	8:3	Psalm 141:2
	8:4	Psalm 141:2
	8:5	Ezekiel 10:2
	8:5-6	Exodus 19:16
	8:7	Exodus 9:23-24; Psalm 18:13; Isaiah 28:2
	8:8	Exodus 7:17-19
	8:10	Isaiah 14:12
	8:11	Jeremiah 9:15; 23:15
	8:12	Isaiah 13:10
Revelation	9:1	Isaiah 14:12-14
	9:2	Genesis 19:28; Exodus 9:8
	9:3	Exodus 10:12-15
	9:4	Ezekiel 9:4
	9:6	Job 3:21
	9:8	Joel 1:6

	9:9	Joel 2:5
	9:11	Job 26:6; 28:22; 31:12; Psalm 88:11; Proverbs 15:11
	9:14	Genesis 15:18; Deuteronomy 1:7; Joshua 1:4
Revelation	10:1	Ezekiel 1:26-28
	10:4	Daniel 8:26; 12:4-9
	10:5	Deuteronomy 32:40; Daniel 12:7
	10:6	Genesis 1:1; Deuteronomy 32:40; Nehemiah 9:6; Daniel 12:7
	10:7	Amos 3:7
	10:9	Jeremiah 15:16; Ezekiel 2:8-3:3
	10:11	Ezekiel 37:4, 9
Revelation	11:1	Ezekiel 40:3-4; Zechariah 2:1-2
	11:2	Ezekiel 40:17-20
	11:4	Zechariah 4:1-3, 11-14
	11:5	Numbers 16:35; II Kings 1:10-12
	11:6	Exodus 7:19-25; I Kings 17:1
	11:7	Daniel 7:3, 7, 8, 21
	11:8	Isaiah 1:9-10; 3:9; Jeremiah 23:14; Ezekiel 16:49; 23:3, 8, 19, 27
	11:9	Psalm 79:2-3
	11:11	Ezekiel 37:9-10
	11:15	Exodus 15:18; Daniel 2:44-45; 7:13-14, 27
	11:18	Psalm 2:1-3; 46:6; 115:13
Revelation	12:1	Genesis 37:9-11
	12:2	Isaiah 26:17; 66:7; Micah 4:9-10
	12:3	Isaiah 27:1; Daniel 7:7, 20, 24
	12:4	Daniel 8:10
	12:5	Psalm 2:8-9; Isaiah 66:7
	12:7	Daniel 10:13, 21; 12:1
	12:9	Genesis 3:1; Job 1:6; 2:1; Zechariah 3:1
	12:10	Job 1:9-11; 2:4-5; Zechariah 3:1
	12:14	Exodus 19:4; Deuteronomy 32:11; Isaiah 40:31; Daniel 7:25; 12:7; Hosea 2:14-15
	12:15	Hosea 5:10

	12:17	Genesis 3:15
Revelation	13:1	Daniel 7:3, 7, 8
	13:2	Daniel 7:4-6, 8
	13:3	Daniel 7:8
	13:4	Daniel 8:24
	13:5	Daniel 7:8, 11, 20, 25; 11:36
	13:7	Daniel 7:21
	13:8	Daniel 12:1
	13:10	Jeremiah 15:2; 43:11
	13:11	Daniel 8:3
	13:13	II Kings 1:9-12
Revelation	14:1	Psalm 2:6; Ezekiel 9:4
	14:2	Ezekiel 1:24; 43:2
	14:3	Psalm 144:9
	14:7	Exodus 20:11
	14:8	Isaiah 21:9; Jeremiah 51:7-8
	14:10	Genesis 19:24; Psalm 75:8; Isaiah 51:17
	14:11	Isaiah 34:10; 66:24
	14:14	Daniel 7:13
	14:18	Joel 3:13
	14:19	Isaiah 63:1-6
	14:20	Joel 3:13
Revelation	15:1	Leviticus 26:21
	15:3	Exodus 15:1-18; Deuteronomy 31:30-32:44; Psalm 92:5; 111:2; 139:14
	15:4	Psalm 86:9; Isaiah 66:23; Jeremiah 10:7
	15:5	Exodus 38:21
	15:6	Leviticus 26:21
	15:7	Jeremiah 25:15
	15:8	Exodus 40:34-35; Leviticus 26:21; I Kings 8:10-11; II Chronicles 5:13-14; Isaiah 6:1-4
Revelation	16:1	Psalm 79:6; Jeremiah 10:25; Ezekiel 22:31
	16:2	Exodus 9:9-11; Deuteronomy 28:35
	16:3	Exodus 7:17-25

	16:4	Exodus 7:17-21; Psalm 78:44
	16:5	Psalm 145:17
	16:6	Isaiah 49:26
	16:7	Psalm 19:9; 145:17
	16:10	Exodus 10:21-23
	16:12	Isaiah 11:15-16; 41:2, 25; 46:11; Jeremiah 51:36
	16:13	Exodus 8:6
	16:14	I Kings 22:21-23
	16:16	Judges 5:19; II Kings 23:29-30; II Chronicles 35:22; Zechariah 12:11
	16:19	Jeremiah 25:15
	16:21	Exodus 9:18-25
Revelation	17:1	Jeremiah 51:13; Nahum 3:4
	17:2	Isaiah 23:17
	17:3	Daniel 7:7
	17:4	Jeremiah 51:7; Ezekiel 28:13
	17:8	Exodus 32:32-33; Daniel 12:1
	17:12	Daniel 7:24-25
	17:16	Leviticus 21:9
Revelation	18:1	Ezekiel 43:2
	18:2	Isaiah 21:9; 34:13-15; Jeremiah 50:30; 51:37
	18:3	Jeremiah 51:7
	18:4	Isaiah 52:11; Jeremiah 50:8; 51:6, 45
	18:5	Jeremiah 51:9
	18:6	Psalm 137:8; Jeremiah 50:15, 29
	18:7	Isaiah 47:7-8; Zephaniah 2:15
	18:8	Isaiah 47:9; Jeremiah 50:31-32
	18:9-19	Ezekiel 26:16-18; 27:26-31
	18:9	Jeremiah 50:46
	18:10	Isaiah 13:1
	18:12	Ezekiel 27:12-25
	18:20	Jeremiah 51:48
	18:21	Jeremiah 51:63-64
	18:22	Isaiah 24:8; Jeremiah 25:10; Ezekiel 26:13
	18:23	Jeremiah 7:34; 16:9; 25:10; Nahum 3:4

Revelation	19:2	Deuteronomy 32:43; Psalm 119:137; Jeremiah 51:48
	19:3	Isaiah 34:9-10; Jeremiah 51:48
	19:5	Psalm 22:23; 134:1; 135:1
	19:6	Psalm 93:1; 97:1; Ezekiel 1:24; 43:2; Daniel 10:6
	19:11	Psalm 18:10; 45:3-4; Isaiah 11:4-5; Ezekiel 1:1
	19:13	Isaiah 63:3
	19:15	Psalm 2:8-9; Isaiah 11:4; 63:3-6
	19:16	Deuteronomy 10:17
	19:17	Isaiah 34:6-7; Ezekiel 39:17
	19:18	Isaiah 34:6-7; Ezekiel 39:18
	19:19	Psalm 2:2; Joel 3:9-11
	19:20	Isaiah 30:33: Daniel 7:11
	19:21	Ezekiel 39:19-20
Revelation	20:2	Genesis 3:1, 13-14; Isaiah 24:21-22
	20:4	Daniel 7:9, 22, 27; 12:2
	20:5	Isaiah 26:14
	20:6	Exodus 19:6; Isaiah 26:19
	20:8	Ezekiel 38:2; 39:1, 6
	20:9	Deuteronomy 23:14; II Kings 1:9-12; Ezekiel 38:22; 39:6
	20:11	Daniel 2:35
	20:12	Exodus 32:32-33; Psalm 62:12; 69:28; Daniel 7:10
	20:15	Exodus 32:32-33; Daniel 12:1
Revelation	21:1	Isaiah 65:17; 66:22
	21:3	Leviticus 26:11-12; Ezekiel 37:27
	21:4	Isaiah 25:8; 35:10; 51:11; 65:19
	21:9	Leviticus 26:21
	21:10	Ezekiel 40:2
	21:11	Isaiah 60:1-2; Ezekiel 43:2
	21:12-13	Ezekiel 48:31-34
	21:15	Ezekiel 40:3, 5
	21:19-20	Exodus 28:17-20; Isaiah 54:11-12
	21:23	Isaiah 60:19-20

	21:24	Isaiah 60:3-5, 16
	21:25	Isaiah 60:11; Zechariah 14:7
	21:26	Isaiah 60:5, 16
	21:27	Isaiah 52:1; Ezekiel 44:9; Zechariah 14:21
Revelation	22:1	Psalm 46:4; Ezekiel 47:1; Zechariah 14:8
	22:2	Genesis 2:9; 3:22-24; Ezekiel 47:12
	22:3	Genesis 3:17-19; Zechariah 14:11
	22:4	Psalm 17:15; Ezekiel 9:4
	22:5	Isaiah 60:19; Daniel 7:18, 22, 27; Zechariah 14:7
	22:10	Daniel 8:26; 12:4, 9
	22:11	Ezekiel 3:27; Daniel 12:10
	22:12	Psalm 62:12; Isaiah 40:10; 62:11
	22:13	Isaiah 44:6
	22:14	Genesis 2:9; 3:22-24; Proverbs 11:30
	22:15	Deuteronomy 23:18
	22:18-19	Deuteronomy 4:2; 12:32
	22:19	Deuteronomy 29:19-20

Scripture Index

INDEX

Scripture Index

Genesis
1-2 415
1:1.....548, 556, 794, 796
1:1-2:25 6
1:2.....531, 555, 556
1:3-5 592
1:14-18 748
1:20, 26.....748
2-3 548
2:7.....708, 710, 714
2:9.....531, 793, 800
2:13.....107
2:17.....146
2:24.....657, 676
3:1.....796
3:1, 13-14 799
3:8.....592
3:11, 24.....531
3:15.....205, 797
3:16-19 525
3:17-19 .....146, 800
3:19.....708, 710, 714
3:22-24 .....793, 800
3:23-24 592
5:24.....699
8:9.....35
9:19.....35
10:8-12 688
11:1.....35
11:1-9 .....235, 688
12:1-3 420
12:7.....420
13:14-17 421
13:15.....377
14:18-20 551
15:12-18 593
15:12-21 421
15:13-16 638
15:15.....699
15:18.....796
19:24.....797
19:28.....795
22:17.....748
25:8.....698
25:17.....698
26:2-5 423
26:4.....748
28:13-15 423
32:22-32 57
35:29a.....698
37:9-11 .....259, 796
37:35.....738
42:38.....738
44:29, 31.....738
47:30a.....699
49:1-28 795
49:3.....794
49:9-10 794
49:11.....793, 795
49:29.....698
49:33.....698

Exodus
3:1-5 594
4:22.....278
4:22-23 678

7:3, 7, 8, 21.....796
7:17-19 795
7:17-21 798
7:17-25 797
7:19-25 796
8:6.....798
9:9-11 797
9:18-25 798
9:23-24 795
9:38-42 457
10:12-15 795
10:21-23 .....129, 798
13:21-22 594
14:19-20 595
14:24.....595
15:1-18 .....274, 797
15:18.....796
16:6-12 595
16:33-34 794
19:4.....796
19:5.....668
19:5-6 .....772, 773
19:6.....793, 794, 799
19:8.....795
19:16.....596, 794, 795
19:16-20 596
20:11.....797
20:18-21 597
24:15.....598
24:15-18 597
24:16.....598
24:17.....598
25:37.....793, 794
28:17.....549
28:17-20 .....549, 799
28:18.....549
28:20.....549
29:1-37 456
29:40.....457
29:42-46 601
32:4.....59, 764
32:32-33 .....794, 798, 799
33:17-23 598
33:18.....599
33:23.....599
34:5-9 599
34:29-35 600
37:23.....793
38:21.....797
40:34.....602
40:34-35 797
40:34-38 601
40:35.....602
40:36-38 602

Leviticus

9:6-7 603
9:22-24 603
21:9.....798
23:40.....795
25:18, 19.....123
26:5.....123
26:11.....795
26:11-12 799
26:21.....797, 799
26:39.....304
26:40-42 .....304, 331
26:40-45 424
26:42.....304

Numbers

13:30-14:45 603
14:10.....603
14:22.....603
15:17-21 .....683, 784
16:1-50 603
16:19.....604
16:30, 33.....738
16:35.....796
16:42-45 604
20:6-13 604
20:14-21 489
25:1-3 794
25:1-16 56
28:3-4 457
28:5.....457
28:9.....457
28:16-24 457
29:12-34 457

29:35-38 457
31:1-20 56

Deuteronomy
1:7.....796
4:2.....800
4:30.....174
5:1-3 570
5:22-27 597
6:10-15 570
7:6.....773
7:6-11 571
10:17.....799
12:10.....123
12:32.....800
14:2.....668, 773
15:6.....400
21:17.....794
23:3-6 56
23:14.....799
23:18.....800
24:1.....576
26:18.....773
28:1.....400
28:13.....400
28:35.....797
29:1-30:20 411
29:2-9 411
29:4.....783
29:10-13 412
29:14-21 412
29:19-20 800
29:22-29 412
30:1-5 98
30:1-10 412
30:3-4 420
30:4.....636
30:5.....425
30:11-20 413
31:30-32:44 797
32:1-43 274
32:8-9 91
32:11.....796
32:22.....738
32:35.....174
32:40.....794, 796
32:43.....799
33:16.....594

Joshua
1:4.....796
47:13-14 466

Judges
5:4-5 342
5:19.....798
5:31.....793

I Samuel
2:6.....738
4:21-22 604
12:11.....123
28:8-19 702
28:12-19 727

II Samuel
7:11b-16 432
12:23.....701

I Kings
1:9-12 797
2:6, 9.....738
4:25.....123
8:1-9 604
8:1-13 604
8:10.....605
8:10-11 797
8:10-13 604
8:11.....605
8:12.....605
8:13.....605
12:25-33 .....59, 764
12:28.....59
16.....764
16:29-33 59
16:29-34 764
16:29-19:18 764
16:31-32 794

17.....764
17:1.....796
17:1-7 764
18.....765
18:29.....765
19.....765
19:1-4 766
19:1-8 765
19:5-8 766
19:10.....766
19:11-13a.....767
19:13b-14 767
19:13b-18 767
19:15-18 767
22:21-23 798

II Kings
1:9-12 799
1:10-12 796
2:23-24 768
8:7-15 768
9:1-10:36 768
9:7, 22.....794
10:32-33 768
13:3, 22-25 768
23:10.....744
23:29-30 798

I Chronicles
17:10b-14 433
24.....165
29:11-12 662

II Chronicles
5:2-7:3 604
5:13-14 797
15:1-7 94
28:3.....744
33:6.....744
35:22.....798
36.....664

Nehemiah
9:6.....796

Job
1:6.....557, 796
1:7.....548
1:9-11 796
2:1.....557, 796
2:2.....548
2:4-5 796
3:17.....793
3:21.....795
7:9.....738
11:8.....738
14:13.....738
14:14a.....699
17:16.....738
19:25-26 699
21:13.....738
24:19.....738
26:6.....738, 739, 740, 796
28:22.....739, 796
31:12.....739, 796
38:4-7 548

Psalms
2:1-3 796
2:1-6 .....312, 346
2:2.....799
2:6.....797
2:6-8 388
2:7-9 794
2:8-9 .....796, 799
2:9.....391
3:8.....795
4:8.....123
7:9.....794
9:17.....738
10:16.....662
13:3.....733
15:1-5 379
16:9.....123
16:10.....738, 739
17:15.....700, 800
18:8-16 350

18:10.....799
18:13.....795
19:9.....798
22:23.....799
23:1-2 795
24:1-6 379
24:7-10 391
26:2.....794
28:4.....794
29:10.....662
30:3.....738
30:9.....734
40:3.....794
45:3-4 799
46:4.....800
46:6.....796
48:1-3 468
48:4-6 795
48:8.....468
48:11.....469
48:12-13 469
49:14.....738
62:12.....799, 800
69:22-23 783
69:28.....515, 516, 799
72.....395
72:1-19 392
73:23-25 700
74:12.....662
75:8.....797
76:7.....795
78:9-11, 67-68 414
78:44.....798
79:1-13 336
79:2-3 796
79:6.....797
80:1-19 337
83:1-8 489
86:9.....797
86:13.....738
87:1-7 469
88:11.....740, 796
89:3-4 435
89:27.....793
89:29.....436
89:34-37 436
90:1-6 662
92:5.....797
93:1.....799
93:1-5 662
97:1.....799
98:1.....794
103:19-22 662
111:2.....794, 797
115:13.....796
115:17.....734
118:22.....771
119:137.....799
121:5-6 795
122:1-9 469
134:1.....799
135:1.....799
135:4.....668
137:8.....798
139:8.....738
139:14.....797
139:16.....515
141:2.....795
144:9.....794, 797
145:1-21 662
145:17.....798
146:4.....710, 713, 734
147:2-3 470
147:12-14 470
147:15.....470
147:19-20 470
148:1-14 662
149:1.....794

Proverbs

1:33.....123
3:12.....794
3:23, 29.....123
5:5.....738
7:27.....738
9:18.....743
11:30.....793, 800
13:12.....793
15:11.....740, 796

15:24.....738
27:20.....740

Ecclesiastes
3:11.....702
9:5.....710, 713
9:5-6 734
9:8.....794
9:10.....734
12:7.....701

Isaiah
1:9-10 796
1:22, 25.....101
1:26.....191, 400
1:26-27 470
2:2-4 .....380, 384, 443
2:3.....455
2:10-12, 19 795
2:12-22 181
3:1-4:1 279
3:9.....796
4:2.....287, 787, 791
4:3-6 470
4:4.....759, 760
4:5-6 616
5:14.....738
6:1.....794
6:1-3 166
6:1-4 797
6:2-3 794
6:3.....35
7:1-12:6 768
7:3.....769
7:3-9 768
7:13-17 5
7:14.....5, 768
8:5-8 769
8:8, 10.....768
8:9-11 769
8:14.....771, 779
8:14-15 769
8:16, 19-20 .....75, 659
8:16-17 769
8:20.....76
9:2.....608
9:6-7 .....388, 435
10:20.....787, 791
10:20-23 .....287, 769, 787, 791
10:23.....198
11:1, 10.....794
11:1-5 .....5, 393
11:2.....166, 793, 794, 795
11:2-5 191
11:4.....799
11:4-5 799
11:6-9 381
11:10.....485, 618
11:11, 16.....792
11:11-12 102
11:11-12:6 .....102, 413, 636
11:15-16 798
12:1-6 414
13:1.....798
13:1-5 .....314, 366
13:1-14:23 314
13:3.....327
13:6-16 182
13:6-22 315
13:6-14:23 315
13:9.....175
13:10.....795
13:19-22 315
13:20-22 .....503, 504
14:1-2 .....315, 401, 439, 485
14:3-11 352
14:9.....738, 743
14:9-10 738
14:9-11 701
14:12.....795
14:12-14 .....550, 795
14:16-21 352
14:20.....363
14:22-23 316
14:26.....35
14:32.....471
16:5.....389
17:12-13 26
19:1-4 94

19:1-22 497
19:16-17 .....497, 498
19:18.....498
19:19-22 498
19:23-25 501
21-23 406
21:9.....797, 798
22:22.....794
23:17.....798
24:1-13 .....179, 180
24:1-27:13 179
24:8.....798
24:19-20 175
24:21-22 799
25:6-8 372
25:8.....799
26:8-10 180
26:14.....799
26:17.....796
26:19.....367, 370, 395, 700, 755, 799
26:20.....174
26:20-21 180
27:1.....796
27:9.....190, 790
27:12.....425
27:12-13 .....98, 415, 419, 636
27:13.....444
28:2.....795
28:14-22 .....198, 252
28:15.....199
28:15, 18.....174
28:16.....771, 787
28:17-18 199
28:17-22 199
28:19-20 200
28:21.....174
28:21-22 200
28:22.....35, 198, 204
29:9-14 76
29:10.....783
29:22-24 405
30-31 6
30:14.....794
30:18-22 405
30:23-26 425
30:33.....744, 799
32:1.....398
32:16-20 442
32:17.....191
33:13-16 291
33:16.....291, 292
33:20-24 471
34:1-7 .....339, 634
34:4.....795
34:6-7 799
34:8.....174
34:8-15 505
34:9-10 799
34:10.....797
34:13-15 798
35:1-2 .....426, 617
35:4.....174
35:5-10 442
35:10.....799
37:31-32 .....287, 787, 791
38:18-19 734
40:1-2 278
40:3-5 131
40:5.....618
40:10.....800
40:27.....259
40:31.....796
41:2, 25.....798
41:4.....793
41:8-16 .....288, 788
41:17-20 .....288, 291, 788
42:1.....486
42:10.....794
43:4.....794
43:5-7 .....415, 636
43:20.....772
43:20-21 773
43:21.....773
44:1-5 406
44:6.....793, 800
45:17.....407
45:18.....555, 556
46:3-4 769

46:11.....798
47:7-8 798
47:8.....123
47:9.....798
48:10.....101
48:12.....793
49.....783
49:1-13 .....778, 783
49:2.....793, 794
49:5.....259
49:5-7 486
49:10.....795
49:22-23 .....401, 439
49:23.....794
49:26.....798
50:1.....575
50:3.....795
51:3.....442
51:11.....799
51:17.....797
52:1.....800
52:1-2 472
52:7-10 472
52:11.....798
52:13-53:12 664
53:1-9 .....190, 331, 332
53:10-12 458
54:1-8 582
54:5.....35
54:11-12 799
55:1.....794
55:12-13 443
56:1-8 486
56:6-7 455
56:6-8 444
58:8-9a.....618
59:20-21 790
60:1-2 799
60:1-3 .....439, 618
60:3-5, 16 800
60:5, 16.....800
60:7.....455
60:10-14 472
60:11.....800
60:13.....455
60:14.....794
60:19.....800
60:19-20 800
61:2.....174
61:4-9 440
61:6.....793, 794
61:6-7 401
61:10-11 443
62:1-12 473
62:2.....794
62:4-5 583
62:11.....800
63:1-6 .....340, 346, 634, 797
63:1a.....340
63:1b.....340
63:2.....341
63:2-6 343
63:3.....799
63:3-6 .....341, 799
64:1-12 335
65:8-16 .....289, 291, 788
65:15.....794
65:17.....799
65:17-25 381
65:18-19 474
65:19.....799
65:21-24 426
66:1-6 135
66:7.....796
66:10-14 475
66:18-21 457
66:18-23 455
66:18-24 487
66:20.....445
66:22.....799
66:23.....797
66:24.....797

Jeremiah

2:2.....793
2:20.....234, 687
3:1-5 572
3:1-9 .....234, 687

3:6-10 576
3:11-18 .....305, 331, 580
3:14-18 305
3:16.....454, 457
3:17.....475
3:18:.....437
3:20.....572
4:7.....27
4:25.....748
6:27-30 101
7:31-32 744
7:34.....798
9:7.....101
9:15.....795
10:7.....797
10:10.....662
10:25.....797
11:20.....794
15:2.....797
15:2-3 795
15:10.....35
15:16.....796
16:9.....798
16:14-15 416
16:16-18 278
17:10.....794
19:1-15 744
19:11.....794
23:3-4 416
23:5-6 .....191, 389, 390, 434
23:5-8 636
23:7-8 416
23:14.....796
23:15.....795
24:7.....407
24:10.....795
25:10.....798
25:15.....797, 798
27:5-8 24
29:17.....795
30:4-7 278
30:7.....174, 795
30:9.....396
30:10.....259
31:1-6 426
31:6.....475
31:7-10 417
31:7-14 636
31:11-14 427
31:15.....259
31:31-34 .....101, 190, 323, 383, 404, 581, 582
31:32.....573
31:38-40 475
33:9-11 476
33:14-17 389
33:15-18 191
33:16.....468
33:17-26 435
33:18.....455
41:9.....798
43:11.....797
48:1-46 496
48:40.....27
48:47.....496
49:1-2 496
49:6.....497
49:7-13 493
49:13-14 330
49:17-18 506
49:19, 22.....27
49:19-20 494
49:20-22 354
49:28-33 502
49:31.....123
49:33.....502
49:34-39 502
49:36.....795
50.....318
50:1.....316
50:1-52:58 320
50:4-5 323
50:6-8 321
50:8.....798
50:9-10 316
50:11-16 316
50:15, 29.....798
50:17, 44.....27

50:19-20 .....323, 407
50:21-27 317
50:28.....321
50:30.....798
50:31-32 798
50:39-40 .....317, 504
50:41-42 318
50:43.....320
50:45-46 318
50:46.....798
51.....318
51:5-6 322
51:6, 45.....798
51:7.....798
51:7-8 797
51:7-9 318
51:10.....322
51:13.....798
51:24.....318
51:25-26 319
51:29.....319
51:31-32 321
51:35-36 319
51:36.....798
51:37.....798
51:41-43 504
51:45.....322
51:48.....798, 799
51:48-49 319
51:50.....322
51:54-58 319
51:59-64 320
51:63-64 798

Lamentations
5:19.....662

Ezekiel
1:1.....794, 799
1:5, 18, 22, 26.....794
1:7, 24.....793
1:10.....794
1:13.....794
1:18.....794
1:24.....797, 799
1:26, 28.....794
1:26-28 .....794, 796
1:28.....605
2:8-33 796
2:9-10 794
3:12, 23.....605
3:27.....800
7:2.....795
8-11 455
8:3-4 605
9:3a.....605
9:4.....795, 797, 800
9:4-6 795
10:1.....794
10:1, 12.....794
10:2.....795
10:4.....605
10:12.....794
10:14.....794
10:18-19 606
11:14-18 417
11:16-21 636
11:19-20 407
11:22-23 606
13:1-7 281
14:21.....795
16:8.....572
16:15-34 573
16:15-41 .....234, 687
16:35-43 577
16:49.....796
16:58-59 578
16:60-63 581
17:3.....27
17:22-24 445
18:4, 20.....710, 713
20:33-38 .....99, 178
20:40-41 446
20:40-42 636
20:42-44 427
22:17-22 101
22:31.....797
23:3, 8, 19, 27.....796

23:5-44 .....234, 687
25:12-14 495
26:7-14 24
26:13.....798
26:16-18 798
26:20.....750
27:12-25 798
27:26-31 798
28:2.....544
28:11-15 543
28:11-16 524
28:13.....529, 548, 555, 798
28:14.....548
28:16-17a.....550
28:16-19 552
28:25-26 428
29:1-16 499
30:1-9 183
31:8.....793
31:14, 16, 18.....750
32:18, 24.....750
32:21.....738
34:23.....795
34:23-24 396
34:25-31 428
35:1-5 491
35:6-9 493
35:10-15 506
36:8-15 429
36:22-24 102
36:22-31 636
36:24.....418
36:25-27 .....190, 408
36:28-38 430
37:1-23 437
37:4, 9.....796
37:9.....795
37:9-10 796
37:15-23 437
37:23.....190
37:24-25 397
37:26-28 450
37:27.....799
38:1-6 106
38:1-39:16 .....6, 106, 118, 122, 126, 512
38:2.....799
38:7-9 109
38:8.....122
38:8, 11-12, 14 117
38:8, 12.....121
38:10-13 110
38:11.....122, 123
38:11, 14.....121
38:14-16 112
38:15.....107
38:17-23 113
38:22.....799
39:1, 6.....799
39:1-16 114
39:2.....107
39:6.....115, 799
39:7-8 115
39:9-10 115
39:11-16 116
39:17.....799
39:17-20 347
39:18.....799
39:19-20 799
39:21-29 347
39:25-29 98
40-48 .....123, 399, 455, 461
40:1-4 446
40:2.....799
40:3, 5.....799
40:3-4 796
40:5-43:27 .....450, 451
40:17-20 796
40:48-41:26 451
42:1-14 452
42:15-20 452
43:1-7a.....615
43:1-9 .....452, 453
43:2.....793, 797, 798, 799
43:10.....546
43:10-12 452
43:13.....548
43:13-27 452
43:14.....546

43:15a.....547
43:18-27 456
43:20, 26.....459
43:27.....463
44:1-2 616
44:1-46:24 452
44:4-8 453
44:9.....800
44:9-14 453
44:15-16 457
44:15-31 453
44:22.....457
45:1-8 .....447, 453
45:8.....399
45:9-12 454
45:9-46:18 453
45:13-46:16 454
45:15.....463
45:15, 17, 20.....459
45:17.....463
45:18.....457
45:21-24 457
45:25.....457
46:4-5 457
46:6-7 457
46:13-15 457
46:16-18 454
46:19-24 454
47:1.....800
47:1-2 464
47:1-12 463
47:8-10 464
47:12.....800
47:13-48:29 .....466, 492
47:15-20 466
48:1.....207
48:1-7 466
48:8-20 448
48:8-22 466
48:23-27 466
48:30-35 468
48:31-34 799
48:35.....794

Daniel
1:1-5:30 32
2 31, 36
2:28-29 793
2:31-45 22
2:35.....799
2:36-45 23
2:37-38 36
2:39.....35
2:39a.....32
2:39b.....32
2:40-43 33
2:44-45 796
4:1-37 27
4:17, 25, 32.....663
4:34.....794
5-6 322
5:12.....214
5:19.....794
5:31-6:28 32
6:26.....663, 794
7 31, 40, 195
7:1-14 25
7:1-28 25
7:2.....795
7:2-3 668
7:3, 7, 8.....797
7:4.....32
7:4-6, 8 797
7:5.....32
7:6.....32
7:7.....798
7:7, 20, 24.....796
7:7-12, 19-27 33
7:8.....205, 797
7:8, 11, 20, 25.....797
7:8, 20, 24.....240
7:9.....793, 794
7:9, 22, 27.....799
7:10.....794, 799
7:11.....799
7:12.....39
7:13.....793, 797
7:13-14, 27 796

7:15-27 28
7:16-27 12
7:18, 22, 27.....800
7:21.....797
7:23.....35
7:23-24 125
7:24.....244
7:24-25 798
7:24a.....126
7:24b.....127
7:25.....196, 215, 796
8 195
8:1-7 32
8:3.....797
8:7-27 32
8:10.....796
8:16-26 12
8:17-18 793
8:23.....205
8:23-25 214
8:24.....797
8:26.....796, 800
9:3-19 187
9:20-23 187
9:20-27 12
9:24.....455
9:24-27 187
9:24a.....188
9:24b.....189
9:25a.....192
9:25b.....192
9:26.....193, 205
9:26-27 .....211, 212
9:2730, 33, 105, 118, 134, 174, 195, 198, 199, 200, 205, 252, 253, 287, 691, 787
10:1-11:2 32
10:1-12:13 12
10:5, 16.....793
10:6.....793, 794, 799
10:9, 10, 12, 15, 19.....793
10:13, 21.....796
11-12 178
11:3-35 32
11:36.....174, 205, 797
11:36-39 .....209, 215
11:36-45 33
11:37.....208, 209, 212
11:38-39 214
11:40.....118, 499
11:40-45 .....240, 252, 293
11:41.....293
11:42-43 499
11:45.....241
11:45b.....241
12:1....174, 285, 796, 797, 798, 799
12:2.....367, 368, 370, 395, 589, 715, 733, 755, 799
12:2-3 700
12:4.....794
12:4, 9.....800
12:4-9 796
12:4a.....536
12:5-7 178
12:7.....30, 120, 794, 796
12:8-9 536
12:10.....800
12:11..120, 197, 253, 362, 633, 691
12:11-12 361
12:12.....120
12:17.....796

Hosea

1-2 234
1-3 687
1:8-9; 2:23 64
1:10-2:1 .....64, 408
1:10-2:1, 23 773
1:11-2:1 409
2:2-5 575
2:6-13 579
2:14-15 796
2:14-23 583
2:23.....64
3:5.....64, 397
5:15.....331, 348

6:1-3 331
10:8.....795
13:14.....700, 793, 795
14:4-8 409
15:10.....796

Joel
1:6.....795
1:15-20 183
1:15-2:11 229
2:1-2, 10-11 152
2:1-11 282
2:2.....174
2:5.....796
2:10.....795
2:18-27 431
2:28-32 .....333, 409
2:31.....130
2:32.....287, 787, 791
3:1-3 .....364, 648
3:9-11 .....312, 354, 799
3:12-13 .....351, 354
3:13.....797
3:14-17 .....282, 357
3:17.....476
3:18.....432, 455, 463
3:19.....499, 507

Amos
3:7.....796
5:18, 20.....174
5:18-20 283
9:2.....738
9:11-12 436
9:13.....432
9:14-15 418

Obadiah
5-9 494
10-14 491
10-20 184
12-14 174
17.....287, 787, 791
17-21 495

Jonah
2:2.....738

Micah
2:12.....292, 330
2:12-13 .....342, 634, 791
4:1-2 445
4:1-5 384
4:6-8 476
4:7.....792
4:9-10 796
4:11-5:1 329
5:7-8 792
7:8.....759, 760
7:14-17 440
7:18-20 .....410, 792

Nahum
1:5.....795
1:6.....795
3:4.....798

Habakkuk
3:1-19 348
3:3.....341, 634
3:13b.....351

Zephaniah
1:7-13 283
1:7-18 103
1:14-18 .....152, 185, 795
1:15.....174
1:16.....174
2:1-2 103
2:7, 9.....792
2:15.....123, 798
3:9-13 410
3:13.....792
3:14-17 477
3:18-20 418
3:20.....441

Haggai

1:10.....748
2:3.....606
2:7, 9.....455
2:9.....606
2:20-23 399

Zechariah

1:8.....794
1:9.....12
1:10-11 548
1:14-17 .....477, 478
2:1-2 796
2:1-5 .....477, 478
2:3.....12
2:4-5 617
2:10-12 478
3:1.....284, 557, 796
3:8-9 794
4:1, 5.....12
4:1-3, 11-14.....796
4:10.....794
4:10, 14.....35
4:11-14 232
5:5.....12
5:5-11 313
6:2.....794, 795
6:3.....794, 795
6:4, 5.....12
6:5.....795
6:7.....548
8:1-8 478
8:6-7 792
8:12.....792
8:20-22 479
8:20-23 618
8:23.....441
9:9-10 5
9:11.....759, 760
10:8-12 419
12, 13, 14.....305
12:1-3 328
12:3.....328
12:4-9 328
12:7.....351, 355
12:10.....305, 331, 333
12:10-14 793
12:10-13:1 .....190, 333
12:11.....798
12:11-14 333
13:1.....333
13:2-6 .....7, 281, 334, 631
13:6.....7
13:7-9 335
13:8-9 .....285, 791
13:9.....101
14:1-2 .....328, 365
14:3-4a.....355
14:4b-5 356
14:7.....800
14:8.....464, 800
14:9.....390
14:9-11 479
14:11.....800
14:12-15 353
14:16-19 .....488, 501
14:16-21 .....455, 457
14:20-21 480
14:21.....800

Malachi

3:1.....130
3:2.....759, 760, 795
3:2-3 101
3:3-4 455
3:17.....773
4:5-6 130
4:6.....132

Matthew

1:20-21 12
2:1-12 607
2:16-18 260
2:18.....259
3:1-6 131
3:12.....756
5:22.....744, 756
5:29.....744
5:30.....744
6:33.....663

7:13.....709, 712
7:22-23 .....80, 85, 559, 560, 732, 734
8:12.....756, 757
8:20.....748
9:24.....733
10:6.....712
10:6, 28.....712
10:28.....709, 744
10:32-33 732
11:7-10 131
11:11-14 133
11:20-24 .....514, 705
11:23.....738, 739
12.....300, 301, 664
12-13 665
12:22-37 294
12:22-45 294
12:40.....750, 753
12:54-57 300
12:57.....300
13.....658, 665, 666
13:3-9 666
13:10-17 659
13:11.....656, 665
13:11, 35.....18
13:20-23 666
13:24-30 667
13:31-32 667
13:32.....748
13:33.....58, 667
13:36-43 667
13:41-42 732
13:42, 50.....757
13:44.....668
13:45-46 668
13:47-50 .....26, 668
13:49-50 705
13:51-53 669
15.....284
15-28 284
15:24.....712
16-20 284
16:1-4 299
16:6, 11-12 667
16:18.....141, 142, 738
16:25.....712
16:27.....346, 614
17:1-8 .....609, 735
17:3.....728
17:9-13 132
18:9.....744, 756
19:16, 23-24 663
19:28.....398
21-22 284
22:1-14 .....370, 589
22:1-14; 25:1-13 162
22:13.....732, 756, 757
22:29-32 703
23.....621
23-26 284
23:1-12 301
23:1-36 301
23:1-39 621
23:13.....302
23:13-14 301
23:15.....301, 744
23:16-22 301
23:23-24 301
23:25-28 301
23:29-36 .....301, 302
23:33.....744, 756
23:37-39 .....93, 306, 331, 621, 665
24-25 621
24:1-2 622
24:1-8 92
24:1-25:46 665
24:3.....623
24:4-6 624
24:6.....625
24:7-8 626
24:9-14 631
24:9-26 630
24:9-28 284
24:14.....177
24:15.....105, 134, 197, 691
24:15-16 253

24:15-20 632
24:15-22 568
24:15-28 257
24:16-20 285
24:21.....174
24:22.....198
24:23-28 258
24:29.....174, 357, 635, 748
24:29-30 634
24:29-31 93
24:30.....343, 615
24:31.....419, 636
24:32-35 637
24:36.....161, 588, 641
24:36-42 640
24:39.....641
24:40-41 641
24:42-44 14
24:43-44 643
24:43-25:30 642
24:45-51 644
24:51.....732, 757
25:1-13 .....371, 589, 644
25:13.....14
25:14-30 646
25:30.....756, 757
25:31-33 365
25:31-46 .....365, 647, 667, 669, 732, 734
25:34, 41, 46.....705
25:34-40 365
25:41.....756
25:41-45 366
25:46.....366, 715, 717, 733, 757
26:8.....712
27-28 284
27:45.....129
27:52.....733, 735

Mark

4 666
4:11.....656
4:13.....666
4:26-29 667
5:39.....733
9:1.....661
9:2-8 .....609, 735
9:4.....728
9:9-13 133
9:17-29 295
9:22.....295
9:23.....295
9:24.....296
9:25-29 296
9:30-37 296
9:38-40 297
9:39.....297
9:41.....298
9:41-45 297
9:43.....744, 756
9:43-45 298
9:45.....745
9:47.....745
9:47-48 715
9:48.....757
13.....621
13:1-2 622
13:3-4 623
13:6-7 624
13:8.....626
13:9-13 .....627, 631
13:14-23 .....630, 632
13:24-26 634
13:26.....615
13:27.....419, 636
13:28-32 637
13:33-37 .....642, 643
14:4.....712

Luke

1:11-20 12
1:13-17 133
1:17.....707
1:26-38 12
1:30-33 390
1:32-33 436
2:8-9 607

3:17.....756
4:5-7 557
7:30-35 296
8 666
8:10.....656
8:30.....295
8:31.....226, 741
8:52.....733
9:28-36 .....609, 735
9:30-31 728
10:15.....738, 739
12:5.....745
12:46-48 732
12:47-48 514
13:28.....757
16:19-31 .....517, 702, 711, 714, 721, 727, 732, 735, 739, 752
16:22-23 746
16:23.....738
16:23-25 743
19:10.....712
19:11-27 160
19:41-44 301
21:5-6 622
21:5-36 621
21:7.....623
21:8-9 624
21:9.....625
21:10-11 626
21:12.....641
21:12-19 .....627, 631
21:20-24 .....93, 629
21:24.....21
21:25-26 635
21:25-27 634
21:27.....615
21:28.....636
21:29-33 637
21:34-36 .....156, 640, 642
21:34-37 150
22:28-30 398
23:43.....518, 701, 747
24:31.....149
24:41-43 149

John

1:1-14 608
1:14.....608, 614
1:19-23 132
1:23.....131
3:3-5 663
3:8.....726
3:27-30 589
3:29.....368
3:36.....757
4:22.....141
4:24.....726
5:22.....513
5:25-29 700
5:28-29 734
5:29.....733
6 749
7:35.....770
8:21, 24.....732
8:44.....552
11.....301
11:1-44 299
11:11-14 733
11:25-26 703
11:42.....299
11:45-46 300
11:47-50, 53 300
12:31.....557, 560
14:1-3 .....142, 145, 151, 161, 588, 642
14:3.....701
14:20.....674
14:23.....674
19:11.....514
19:39-40 53
20:16.....149
20:17.....554
20:17, 27.....149
20:19.....149
20:26-29 149
21:7.....149
21:20-23 153

Acts
1:5.....141, 142
1:9-11 343
2:1-3 612
2:27.....738
2:27, 31.....739
2:31.....739
3:21.....731
7:53.....12
7:59.....736
7:60.....733
8:12.....663
9:3.....613
9:3-8 612
10:12.....748
11:15-16 141
13:36.....733
14:17.....748
15:14.....140, 668, 684
17:1-4 78
18:28.....79
20:25.....663
20:29-31 51
22:6.....613
22:6-11 613
26:13.....613
26:13-18 613
27:17, 26, 29.....775
28:23-24 79

Romans
1:18.....151
2:5-11 705
2:28-29 776
3:1-2 786
3:25.....518
5:9.....151
5:12.....556
5:12-14 146
8:18.....703
8:29.....612
9, 10, 11.....773
9-11 .....677, 769
9:1-3 774
9:1-5 .....678, 774
9:1-29 .....678, 774
9:1-11:24 774
9:1-11:36 677
9:4-5 775
9:6.....775
9:6-13 .....678, 775
9:7-9 776
9:7-13 .....678, 776
9:10-13 776
9:14-18 679
9:14-29 .....679, 777
9:19.....679
9:19-29 679
9:22.....709, 712
9:22-23 679
9:24.....679
9:25-29 679
9:30-31 778
9:30-33 .....680, 778
9:30-10:21 .....680, 778
9:31-33 782
9:32a.....778
9:32b-33 778
10:1-11 .....680, 779
10:6-11 680
10:7.....741
10:12-13 779
10:14-21 .....681, 780
10:19.....772
10:21.....780
11:1-10 .....681, 682, 780, 789
11:1-24 780
11:1-32 681
11:1-36 681
11:2.....685
11:2b-4 781
11:5.....668
11:6.....782
11:7.....782
11:8-10 783
11:11-15 .....140, 682, 783
11:12.....682
11:13-14 682

11:15.....656, 683
11:16.....683, 784
11:16-24 .....683, 784, 789
11:17.....683, 784
11:17-24 141
11:18-22 .....683, 785
11:23-24 .....684, 785
11:24.....785, 786, 788
11:25.....668, 684, 686
11:25-26a.....788
11:25-27 .....140, 332, 410, 791
11:25-32 684
11:25-36 788
11:26-27 684
11:26b-27 790
11:26b-29 790
11:27.....190
11:28-29 685
11:29.....685
11:30-32 .....685, 790
11:33-36 791
13:11-12 154
14:10-12 156
16:25.....654
16:25-26 .....18, 652
16:25-27 .....656, 685

I Corinthians
1:18-3:9 657
2:1.....656, 672
2:6-8 658
2:6-3:3 659
2:7.....18, 652, 656
2:7-8 659
2:11-13, 15-16 659
2:12.....663
2:14.....653, 659
3:1.....659
3:1-3 .....84, 659
3:10-15 .....156, 589
3:13-17 .....759, 760
4:1.....654, 657, 672
4:6.....83, 85, 660
5:6-8 667
7:1.....641
7:1-7 676
8:1.....641
9:24-25 158
11:26.....459
12:1.....641
12:13.....141
13:2.....657
13:2; 14:2.....654
14:2.....657
15:6, 18, 20, 51.....733
15:19.....704
15:20-23 369
15:23.....395
15:24-26 563
15:24-28 512
15:25-26 .....710, 714
15:27-28 731
15:29.....759, 760
15:35-49 148
15:50.....232
15:50-58 .....145, 232, 642, 677, 724
15:51.....232, 657
15:51-52 677
15:53.....677
15:53-54 697
15:54-58 149
16:1.....641

II Corinthians
3:12-18 .....600, 611
4:4.....557, 560
4:5-6 610
4:16-18 704
5:1-8 701
5:1-10 723
5:6-8 .....736, 754
5:8.....519
5:9-10 732
5:10.....156, 734
6:2.....732
6:14-7:1 88

11:1-2 675
11:2.....235, 586
11:3.....558
11:3-4 .....81, 558
11:13.....560
11:13-14 559
11:14.....557
12:1-4 .....748, 749, 754
12:4.....747
13-15 81

Galatians

1:8-9 88
2:7-8 770
3:19.....12
4:26.....524, 749
6:7-8 732
6:16.....668, 782

Ephesians

1:9-10 657
1:19-20 142
2:1-3, 9 713
2:2.....556, 673
2:11-12 671
2:11-16 .....139, 784
2:11-22 671
2:11-3:12 539
2:13-15 671
2:15.....672
2:15-22 671
2:19.....671
2:19-22 653
2:20.....672
2:21-22 672
3:1.....671, 672
3:1-10 653
3:1-12 671
3:1-13 657
3:2.....672
3:3.....654
3:3-4 672
3:4.....654
3:4-5 652
3:4-5, 9 18
3:5.....654, 672
3:5-6 784
3:6.....140
3:7.....672
3:8.....672
3:8-9 654
3:9.....652, 673
3:10.....673
3:12.....673
4:7-12 142
4:8-10 .....518, 754
4:9-10 750
5:22.....675
5:22-33 675
5:23.....675
5:24.....675
5:25.....675
5:25-27 .....161, 235, 586, 587
5:26-27 675
5:27.....675
5:28-30 675
5:29.....676
5:31.....676
5:32.....676
5:33.....676
6:12.....82, 556, 673
6:19-20 .....654, 657, 658, 672

Philippians

1:21-23 754
1:22-24 701
1:23.....519, 736
1:23-24 .....705, 720
2:9-10 731
3:19.....709, 712
3:20.....705
3:21.....148, 612

Colossians

1:13-14 663
1:18.....139
1:20.....710, 714, 715, 731
1:24.....673

1:24-29 673
1:25.....673
1:26.....18, 652, 654
1:26-27 657
1:27.....674
1:28-29 674
2:2-3 657
2:9-10 674
3:4.....674
3:10.....612
3:11.....674
4:2-4 .....658, 672
4:3.....657
4:3-4 654
4:11.....663

I Thessalonians
1:9-10 151
1:10.....151, 174
2:19.....158
4-5 690
4:13-14 733
4:13-18 .....143, 151, 161, 588, 642
4:15-17 232
4:16.....147, 369, 395
5:1.....641
5:1-3 128
5:1-10 151
5:2.....174
5:3.....709, 713
5:9.....174

II Thessalonians
1:7-10 732
1:9.....756
2:1-3 .....67, 127
2:1-12 .....127, 565, 689
2:3.....205
2:3-4 .....105, 134, 197, 215, 254
2:3-10 633
2:5-7 567
2:6-7 631
2:7.....657, 658
2:8.....205, 351, 709, 713
2:8-10 634
2:8-12 .....254, 256, 267, 567
2:9.....213
2:10.....692
2:11.....692
2:12.....692

I Timothy
1:3-4, 18-20 51
3:6.....550
3:9.....657
3:16.....657
4:1.....67, 83, 86
4:1-2 86
4:1-3 67
6:3-10, 20-21 51

II Timothy
1:10.....704, 710, 714
2:14-18 51
3:5.....68
3:12.....660
3:12-4:4 .....84, 660
3:13.....660
3:14-17 660
4:1-2 660
4:1-4 51
4:3-4 660
4:7-8 .....159, 705

Titus
2:14.....760

Hebrews
1:1-3 610
1:3.....760
1:14.....727, 735
2:2.....12
2:5-9 562
2:16.....715, 716
5:11-14 659
6:2.....716

7:1-28 772
9:13.....462
9:14.....717
9:15.....518
9:23-26 554
9:27.....232, 707, 732
10:1-4 459
10:4.....458, 517
10:4, 11.....461
11:5.....232, 699
11:9-10 524
11:12.....748
12:22-24 .....525, 749
13:15-16 772

James
1:1.....770
1:11.....775
1:12.....159
1:26-27 234
1:27.....687
2:14-26 649
3:6.....745
5:7-9 154

I Peter
1:1-2 770
1:18-19 773
1:24.....775
2:1-3 770
2:1-10 .....769, 770, 777, 779, 782
2:4.....770
2:4, 6.....772
2:5.....771
2:6-7a.....771
2:6-8 771
2:7b-8 771
2:9-10 772
2:9a.....772
2:9b.....773
2:12.....770
3:18-19 753
3:19.....722
3:19, 4:6.....731
4:3.....770
5:2-4 159
5:8.....557

II Peter
1:16-18 609
1:16-21 79
1:20-21 85
2:1.....70, 709, 712
2:1-22 68
2:4.....732, 742
2:9.....722, 732
2:12.....709, 712
2:17.....757
3:3-4 71
3:4.....733
3:10-12 185

I John
1:9.....459
2:18-19 208
2:22.....205
2:22-23 70
4:2-3 70

II John
7 70
7-11 88

Jude
6-7 742
7 716, 756
13.....732, 757
14-15 346
17-19 71

Revelation
1:1.....793
1:1-3 .....8, 12
1:4.....793
1:4, 16, 20.....61
1:4-8 .....8, 14
1:5.....793
1:6.....772, 793

1:7.....793
1:8.....793
1:9-11 8
1:9-20 .....8, 15
1:12.....793
1:12-16 .....8, 610, 614
1:13.....793
1:14.....793
1:15.....793
1:16.....55, 793
1:17.....793
1:17-18 53
1:17-20 8
1:18.....739, 793
1:19.....8
1:20.....654, 658, 670
2:1-7 .....8, 50
2:1-3:22 8
2:4.....793
2:7.....747, 755, 793
2:8-11 .....8, 52
2:10.....159
2:11.....757
2:12.....794
2:12-17 .....8, 54
2:14.....794
2:17.....794
2:18.....794
2:18-29 .....8, 57
2:20.....667, 794
2:20-22 235
2:22.....174
2:23.....794
2:27.....794
3:1-6 .....8, 61
3:4.....794
3:5.....515, 794
3:7.....794
3:7-13 .....8, 63
3:9.....794
3:10.....153, 174
3:12.....794
3:14.....794
3:14-22 .....8, 65
3:18.....794
3:19.....794
4-19 376
4:1.....749, 794
4:1-11 .....9, 163
4:1-5:14 9
4:1-22:21 9
4:2.....794
4:2-3 164
4:3.....794
4:5.....165, 794
4:6.....794
4:6-8 166
4:7.....225, 794
4:8.....794
4:9.....717, 794
4:9-11 166
4:11.....794
5:1.....167, 794
5:1-14 .....9, 167
5:2-4 167
5:5.....794
5:5-7 167
5:6.....243, 794
5:8.....794
5:8-14 168
5:9.....794
5:10.....772, 794
5:11.....794
6-9, 17 203
6-18 203
6:1-2 204
6:1-17 9
6:1-9:21 9
6:1-18:24 9
6:2.....794
6:3-4 216
6:4.....794
6:5.....795
6:5-6 216
6:7-8 217
6:8.....739, 795
6:9-11 153, 217, 395, 631, 688, 720, 728, 736
6:12.....795

6:12-17 218
6:13.....748, 795
6:14.....795
6:15.....689, 795
6:16.....795
6:16-17 174
6:17.....151, 795
7 203, 568
7:1.....795
7:1-4 175
7:1-8 .....207, 219, 632
7:1-17 .....9, 175
7:3.....795
7:3-4 265
7:4.....795
7:4-8 212
7:9.....286, 795
7:9-17 .....221, 286, 632, 736
7:10.....795
7:14.....174, 795
7:15.....795
7:16.....795
7:16-17 721
7:17.....795
8-9 .....203, 693
8:1-6 223
8:1-9:21 9
8:3.....795
8:4.....795
8:5.....795
8:5-6 795
8:7.....223, 795
8:8.....795
8:8-9 224
8:10.....795
8:10-11 224
8:11.....795
8:11-12 260
8:12.....224, 795
8:13.....225
9-17 177
9:1.....260, 741, 795
9:1-12 225
9:2.....741, 795
9:3.....795
9:4.....795
9:6.....795
9:8.....795
9:9.....796
9:11.....740, 741, 796
9:13-21 227
9:14.....796
9:20-21 231
10-13 264
10-14 203
10-14, 17 237
10:1.....796
10:1-2 693
10:1-7 693
10:1-11 .....9, 237
10:1-14:20 9
10:3-4 693
10:4.....796
10:5.....796
10:5-6 693
10:5-7 693
10:6.....717, 796
10:7.....658, 796
10:8-10 239
10:9.....796
10:11.....239, 796
11.....203, 269, 692, 786
11-13 264
11-14 270
11:1.....796
11:1-2 .....9, 21, 105, 135, 240, 254, 691
11:2.....796
11:2, 3.....30
11:2-3 196
11:3-4 671
11:3-6 231
11:3-14 9
11:4.....796
11:5.....796
11:6.....796
11:7.....153, 205, 741, 796
11:7-13 245

11:8.....796
11:9.....796
11:11.....796
11:13.....786
11:14-19 269
11:15.....796
11:15-19 .....9, 694
11:18.....174, 796
11:19.....274
12.....243
12-13 270
12-16 16
12:1.....796
12:1-17 .....9, 258, 284
12:2.....796
12:3.....796
12:3-4 551
12:4.....552, 796
12:5.....391, 796
12:6.....196, 290
12:6, 13-17 561
12:6, 14.....30
12:7.....796
12:7-12 .....242, 285, 553, 554, 560
12:9.....796
12:10.....557, 796
12:11.....153
12:13-17 633
12:14.....796
12:15.....796
12:17.....786, 797
13.....40, 204, 243, 266, 561
13:1.....26, 797
13:1-10 .....9, 37, 210
13:2.....214, 797
13:3.....241, 243, 797
13:3-9 215
13:3-10 247
13:4.....797
13:5.....30, 196, 797
13:5-7a.....248
13:7.....797
13:7, 15.....153
13:8.....515, 797
13:10.....797
13:11.....797
13:11-15 .....249, 255, 633, 634
13:11-18 9
13:13.....797
13:14-15 197
13:16-18 .....250, 692
14.....270, 290
14:1.....797
14:1-5 265
14:1-20 9
14:2.....797
14:3.....797
14:6-7 .....266, 267, 692
14:7.....174, 797
14:8.....266, 797
14:9-11 275
14:9-12 .....266, 568, 692
14:10.....797
14:10, 19.....151, 174
14:10-11 757
14:11.....716, 757, 797
14:13.....153, 267, 720
14:14.....797
14:14-16 268
14:17-20 268
14:18.....797
14:19.....797
14:19-20 354
14:20.....797
15-16 .....239, 264, 267, 270, 273
15-16, 18 203
15:1.....797
15:1, 7.....151, 174
15:1-8 9
15:1-16:1 273
15:1-16:21 .....9, 694
15:3.....797
15:4.....797
15:5.....797
15:6.....797
15:7.....716, 717, 797

15:8.....614, 797
16.....18
16:1.....151, 174, 274, 695, 797
16:1-21 9
16:2.....274, 797
16:3.....275, 797
16:4.....798
16:4-7 275
16:5.....798
16:6.....798
16:7.....798
16:8-9 276
16:10.....798
16:10-11 276
16:12.....798
16:12-16 .....276, 309, 695
16:13.....250, 798
16:14.....798
16:16.....798
16:17-21 .....276, 356, 695
16:19.....798
16:21.....798
17.....203, 218, 687
17-18 686
17-20 17
17:1.....798
17:1, 15.....26, 668
17:1-2 686
17:1-6 .....233, 631, 686
17:1-8 667
17:1-18 .....9, 686
17:1-18:24 9
17:2.....687, 798
17:3.....798
17:3-6 687
17:4.....798
17:5, 7.....654, 658
17:6.....153, 688
17:7-14 40
17:8.....741, 798
17:8-9 688
17:8b.....516
17:11-12 688
17:12.....798
17:12-13 244
17:15.....210, 687
17:16.....245, 798
17:16-17 689
17:17.....244
17:18.....689
18.....266
18:1.....798
18:1-2 504
18:1-3 323
18:1-24 .....9, 323
18:2.....798
18:3.....798
18:4.....798
18:4-5 324
18:5.....798
18:6.....798
18:6-8 324
18:7.....798
18:8.....798
18:9.....798
18:9-10 325
18:9-19 .....325, 798
18:10.....798
18:11-17a.....325
18:12.....798
18:17b-19 326
18:20.....326, 798
18:21.....798
18:21-24 326
18:22.....798
18:23.....798
18:24.....153
19.....15, 18, 204
19-22 686
19:1-2 343
19:1-8 343
19:1-10 .....9, 162, 343
19:1-18 343
19:1-20:3 9
19:2.....799
19:3.....344, 504, 799
19:4-5 344

19:5.....799
19:6.....799
19:6-8 161, 162, 235, 344, 588, 675
19:6-9 587
19:9.....344, 370, 589
19:10.....345
19:11.....350, 799
19:11-16 345
19:11-18 9
19:13.....799
19:15.....391, 799
19:16.....799
19:17.....799
19:17-18 346
19:18.....799
19:19.....9, 348, 799
19:20.....9, 250, 363, 713, 717, 745, 799
19:21.....9, 347, 799
20.....17, 18, 375
20:1.....741
20:1-3 .....9, 363, 554, 555, 561
20:2.....799
20:3.....558, 741
20:4.....9, 368, 370, 395, 799
20:4-6 .....9, 383, 394, 755
20:4-6, 11-15 700
20:5.....799
20:5-6 .....9, 369
20:6.....772, 799
20:7-9 121
20:7-10 .....10, 511, 554, 555, 562
20:7-14 10
20:8.....799
20:9.....799
20:10.....250, 713, 717, 745
20:11.....799
20:11-12 513
20:11-14 10
20:11-15 .....733, 734, 739, 756
20:12.....799
20:13.....516, 739
20:14.....739, 745, 757
20:14-15 517
20:15.....799
21.....11
21-22 382
21:1.....556, 563, 799
21:1-2 524
21:1-3 619
21:1-8 .....10, 523
21:1-22:5 .....10, 523, 555, 749, 755
21:2.....527
21:3.....799
21:3-4 525
21:4.....799
21:5-8 526
21:8.....745, 757
21:9.....590, 799
21:9-10 .....10, 527
21:9-22:5 .....10, 527, 590
21:10.....799
21:10-11 619
21:10-22:5 590
21:11.....527, 799
21:11-22:5 .....10, 527
21:12-13 .....528, 799
21:14.....528
21:15.....799
21:15-17 528
21:18-21 529
21:19-20 799
21:22-24 530
21:23.....800
21:23-24 619
21:24.....800
21:25.....800
21:25-27 530
21:26.....800
21:27.....800
22.....11
22:1.....800
22:1-2a.....531
22:2.....800
22:2b.....531

22:3.....800
22:3-4 532
22:4.....800
22:5.....532, 800
22:6-7 535
22:6-9 .....10, 535
22:6-21 .....10, 535
22:8-9 535
22:10.....800
22:10-15 .....10, 536
22:11.....536, 800
22:12.....537, 800
22:13.....537, 800
22:14.....537, 800
22:15.....537, 757, 800
22:16.....10, 61, 538
22:17.....10, 538
22:18-19 .....10, 539, 800
22:19.....800
22:20.....10, 154, 540
22:21.....10, 540

"Eschatology seems to suffer at the hands both of its friends and foes. Those who play it down usually avoid assigning specific meaning to prophetic texts. Those who play it up often assign too much.

But the prophetic portions of the Bible won't go away. The biblical interpreter must interact with them and in the detail and specificity in which they were written. Mr. Fruchtenbaum has done that, seeking always to try to understand the full meaning of the biblical revelation...

The author's consideration of the biblical material is thorough and thought-provoking...those who read this book cannot help but be instructed and stimulated by his work."

From the foreword by
Dr. Charles C. Ryrie



"...the finest summation of the overall future development of world events as set forth in the entire Word of God..."
Dr. James O. Combs,
Provost, Louisiana Baptist University

Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, Th.M., Ph.D., is one of the foremost authorities on the nation of Israel, and is a messianic Jewish believer. This has made him a popular speaker and teacher at Bible conferences, congregations, and churches throughout the world. He received his B.A. from Cedarville University, his Th.M. from Dallas Theological Seminary, and his Ph.D. from New York University. His graduate work also includes studies at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Based in Tustin, California, he is founder and director of Ariel Ministries, which is dedicated to evangelism of Jewish people and discipleship of Jewish and Gentile believers from a messianic Jewish frame of reference.

Cover Art: Matthew Lipsey

אריאל ARIEL MINISTRIES

ISBN 0-914863-09-6

9 780914 863090